

Th. Sect.

THE CHURCH IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE
UNDER THE CONSTANTIANS.

A study of the relations of Church and State during
the reigns of Constantine the Great, ^{Constantine II} Constans, ~~Constantine~~,
Constantius and Julian.

Thesis presented for the Degree of D. Litt.

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THE CHURCH IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE UNDER THE CONSTANTIANs.

PREFACE.

The Church and State came first into relationships of alliance during the reign of Constantine, and thus the events, which occurred then and immediately thereafter, present us with a field of study wherein we may hope to discover the essential principles of their antagonism and their co-partnership. With the purpose of studying those principles in action this study of "The Church in the Roman Empire under the Constantians" has been undertaken. Our attempt is to trace the various phases of policy adopted by the successive emperors towards the Church and to elucidate their motives, character and tendencies, and also to exhibit how the Church reacted under ^{these} ~~the~~ influences and developed her own distinctive principles of polity in the process of adjusting herself to the new relations. The surprising feature of this age was not that the Empire adopted ^{the} ~~a~~ new religion, but that some quality in the new faith kept ^{the Church} ~~her~~ in isolation from the general administration and left her an allied but equal sovereign power. The principles which caused her to seek to do this and the methods by which she accomplished it are, we consider, our ^{main concern} ~~principal task~~ in dealing with this period of history. We have also sought to show how the various points of controversy emerged one by one, which have formed the subject of debate upon the question of Church and State from that day to this. How the early Fourth Century Church dealt with them and her opinion upon them may not certainly be regarded as determinative, but it cannot but be important for the student of the subject. We have thus attempted to analyse her consciousness upon these topics with

particular care. Of necessity in our attempt to elucidate the details of our special subject there has had to be said much about the Arian controversy and other general subjects connected with these reigns. Our effort has not been, however, to deal with the theological aspects of that great debate or to put on record a general narrative of events throughout our period, but to present a special study of the effects of the impact of the two great forces brought into contact by the policy of the Constantians. The general history of the time and especially that of the Arian controversy have formed the subject of very many special works, but so far as is known to the author, a review of the period from our special point of view, while forming the subject of chapters or portions of larger works, has not been itself delimited for a special review, and where it has been so treated, has been often marred by an excessive Roman Catholic partisanship or by a superficial acceptance of the current idea that the story is entirely one of decadent secularisation. Ordinary text-books are content with this word without further enquiry as to what secularisation may mean and wherein its evil consists. Our effort has been to probe into this process of secularisation ^{in order} to discover what elements in it were the

Church's protective armour to resist the encroachment of the world

and what the effects of encroachment itself, ^{that} ~~and also we have sought~~ ^{what were means}

~~to consider what was her attitude to the new duties~~ ^{adopted by her in the new duties} made possible by State alliance

~~and to the~~

~~and what the use of new resources opened by that alliance, and~~ ^{up to her}

~~and have endeavoured to detect what her conception of her spiritual~~ ^{obtain her conception of her spiritual autonomy and what amount of}
^{autonomy might be, and what amount of accommodation to worldly methods}
~~State interference or use of State resources she thought consistent~~
~~and ideals of government, she thought consistent therewith.~~

^{therewith} As her absorbing problem was the theological one we

have no theoretical statement upon this topic, ^{for} ~~and thus~~ St. Augustine's

De Civitate Dei is ^{the} ~~our~~ first elaborate pronouncement upon the

subject. It marks in our opinion ^{however, a certain modification} ~~a change~~ of view suggested by the

fall of Rome. The earlier one can only be extracted from fugitive statements or from inferences drawn from her actions. The feelings bred by the first period of her interrelation are however so important in our opinion that they justify close consideration of this sort.

The author has also felt it absolutely necessary to study these matters afresh from the original sources, not merely from the writings of the earliest historians nearest in time to the events, but from the various actual documents of the period itself which they transmit. No new material has come to hand bearing upon these events except the important Papyri edited last year by H. Idris Bell which throw important light upon Athanasius' use of the civil power in Alexandria, but the whole of the older material stands much in need of editing and critical revision. Such treatment has been applied recently to the letters and writings of Julian in two notable editions, but a modern and complete work containing Constantine's laws and letters of a similar kind is still a desideratum. Our account of his policy and of that of his sons is based upon a conscientious study of the contemporary documents and an effort to appraise the value of the historical narratives from their standpoint, with the result that we appear in many places to get a more understandable sequence of events in many instances than the commonly accepted accounts provide.

A thesis upon the same subject was presented last year for consideration and was not accepted. This present work has been almost entirely rewritten so that the previous one may be said to provide only the material upon which it is based. A more thoroughly critical method has been adopted towards the sources; and the principles sought to be elucidated, which were in the former effort often lost in the details of events, have been drawn out and

discussed in detail. The reign of Julian, which was treated scantily before, has received the same close attention as has been given to the other Constantians and the discussion of his policy is based upon the same careful study of his works. In addition ~~the same careful study of his works~~ ^{a fuller study} has been made of the modern literature of the subject. From these a broader view of the subject has been gained and a few points which had escaped attention have been noted. The greater part of this reading having been subsequent to the analysis and treatment of the original sources, the author would however claim for his work independence and originality; and in view of the fact that no work, known to him, deals with this subject from the special point of view here put forward, hopes that it may be accepted as a contribution to knowledge.

For these reasons he would submit ^{it} as a Thesis for the degree of D.Litt. of the University of Edinburgh and certifies that it is entirely his own production.

April, 1925.

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INTRODUCTION

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

AND

LITERATURE.



DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE AND LITERATURE.

This presentation of the history of the period of the Constantians with special reference to the relations of the Church and State during their reigns has had for its ground-work the documents and original letters, edicts etc., of the period which have been transmitted to us. Such a foundation is absolutely necessary in any attempt to arrive at truth regarding a period so full of controversy, in which not only the motives but the actual actions of the principal actors become distorted through prejudice. Our principal authorities were keenly involved in the debates of these times and could not see the issues with the clearest perspective, and such an atmosphere produces the frame of mind which is liable to record as certain, what might only be the results of malicious slander or of embittered conjecture. It is necessary therefore first to review the actual monumenta, the first-hand writings of the actors themselves, before commencing to appraise the value of the different historians who have left narratives of these events. We are fortunate in having for this period a goodly collection of these documents, chiefly because a great many of these original writings have been preserved by ^{early} ~~the~~ ~~historians and controversialists, while others were~~ ~~writers of the period and others are~~ naturally recorded in the archives of civil and ecclesiastical law.

Of original writings of Constantine the Great we have first of all his Edicts as contained in the Codex Theodosius (ed. Gothofred Lugduni 1665.) Book XVI., under the various titles, preserves his legal enactments relative to the Christian faith. These and also all his other acts and decrees have been collected in Migne's Patrologiae Cursus Completus Vol. VIII. where some notes are also added. Though Beugnot ventures to dispute the authenticity of an edict in the Codex Theodosius credited to Constantius, it ^{may} ~~can~~ be ^{regarded} ~~taken~~ as almost an impossibility that any forgery could creep

into this compilation of Roman Law, made by those who had access to the official documents of the legislative system of the Empire. These are thus unquestionable evidence bearing on the attitude adopted towards Christianity and paganism throughout this time. We have next letters and orations of Constantine preserved in various writings of the period. These are also collected in the volume of Migne's *Patrologiae Cursus* referred to above. Here ^{in each case} however the danger of forgery is not absent and we must examine the credentials of the transmitter of the document as well as the internal evidence of authenticity. Eusebius of Caesarea wrote too near to the time of the Emperor, and knew him too intimately, for us to doubt the essential value of what he hands on to us. Athanasius both by his general perspicacity and by his moral integrity gives us the same confidence. Thus we must certainly add to the collection of Migne the letter calling the assembly of Tyre to his court after the appeal of Athanasius which is to be found in his *Apology against the Arians* p.86. On the other hand Migne includes others which are certainly not authentic, notably, "To the Bishops after the Council of Arles"; "To the Churches after the Council of Nicaea, to Arius and the Arians"; "Against Eusebius and Theognis" commencing "Omnes probe nostis fratres delectissimi"; The Letter of Helena and his reply; and "To the Numidian Bishops". Some of these read like the exercises of monks, revealing to us the dangers against which we have to guard. The reasons for rejecting them will be shown in the course of exposition. The only real literary effort of a sustained kind of Constantine is the "Oration to the Saints" (p.399 ff. of Migne's *Cursus VIII.*) It is deeply interesting in itself but not of great value for our present purposes, even if we could shake off the feeling of a suspicious resemblance in its style and thought to

those of Eusebius.

The acts and edicts of Constantius, Constans, and Constantine II. are similarly to be found in the Codex Theodosius, and letters of these emperors especially of the first, have been preserved by various historians of the period. No collection of these has yet been made, lacking as they do the interest of the greater Constantian's writings. For the same reason forgeries have not been attempted, as their name had not the prestige, which a forger would look for, in seeking to give borrowed authoritative-ness to his writings. The literary efforts of all these ^{emperors} are eclipsed in number if not in importance by those of the last of the Constantians, who for his short life had a great output. ~~Unfortunately for our purpose~~ His ecclesiastical legislation was annulled and thus the Codex Theodosius has only accidental traces of it. We have, however, his letters and epistles which speak his mind upon the subject. Classical editions of all his works are those of Spanheim, Lipsiae, 1696, and Hertlein, Leipzig, 1876. There are however two very important recent editions which surpass these in value. Bidez et Cumont, Paris, 1922, and the Loeb Classical Library, London, 1923. Our references to the letters are in the numbering of the latter with the Hertlein in numbers *in brackets*.

In addition to the laws, letters and edicts of the Emperors we have also as important documents the canons and synodical letters of the various Councils. These have been collected by various writers, notably by Mansi (Florence 1759). They are also to be found in Hefele (Concilien Geschichte, translated - Clark, Edinburgh 1871). The Synodical letters are to be found in the various controversial writings of the period especially in those of Athanasius and Hilary. These ^{last named} writers also show us the tone of thought in the Church under the influence of the policy of

these Emperors. The works of Athanasius have been edited in many forms. His historical tractates are collected in a handy volume called, Athanasius' Historical Writings, edited by Bright (Oxford 1881). They are also to be found in translation, with valuable notes by Newman, in the Library of the Fathers (Oxford 1842). Their historical value has to be estimated from the consideration of the writer's undoubted sincerity taken in conjunction with his polemical purpose which makes him careless of time-sequence in contrast with logical consequence, and also his peculiarly unsuitable point of view to get a true perspective, either of his own actions or those of his opponents. Hilary has the importance of an enlightened and not too prejudiced eye-witness. His writings are available in two volumes of Migne's Cursus. The writings of Bishop S. Julius and Liberius of Rome are to be found recorded in the works of the two afore-mentioned writers, and also ^{those} of other clerics, civil governors and others, whose works may be said to form the actual transactions of the period.

The evidence of the coinage of these reigns throws also some light upon ^{the} States' attitude to Christianity and to Paganism. In this connection the discussions of Burckhardt, Der Aufsatz von Feuerdent, and Die Zeit Constantins, and Schiller, Geschichte der Römischen Kaiserzeit, have been made use of. These writers and others give important evidence ^{also} as to ancient inscriptions which show the prevalence even under the Constantinian regime of the pagan cults.

~~Last~~

There have, ~~within the~~ ^{Last} year, come to light certain fresh documents of this period, namely certain letters of the Melitians in Alexandria during the period of Athanasius' rule. These have been published by H. Idris Bell under the title, "Jews and Christians in Egypt" (London 1924). Their bearing is upon a very

small part of the subject here dealt with, but their importance lies in their furnishing us with a portrait of Athanasius of a perfectly sincere kind from a new point of view. The Melitians were not Arians as it was in fact their leader who first pointed out to Alexander the heresy of his presbyter, but they were separatists from the Catholic body in the city and came under severe hardships in consequence. Athanasius accuses them and the Eusebians and Arians of making common cause to resist and obstruct his spiritual government of his See. The evidence of these documents shows that they might be driven to do so by the harsh treatment meted out to all non-conformists by Athanasius, and in consequence supports the conclusion, elsewhere strongly suggested, that the acrimony of the Arian controversy with its unfortunate results was largely owing to the State-measures taken for the purpose of securing unity. This is the subject of a considerable portion of this work, wherein we try to show that from Nicaea itself to the double Synod of Seleucia and Rimini, the State gave its aid to the catholic or ascendant party or sought for itself to find a means of driving the separatists into union. In the lulls of this strong effort and when it was abandoned under Julian harmony prevailed. These documents, showing how much civil force was at the disposal of the Bishop of Alexandria and how heavily he made it felt, are symptomatic of what was going on in every quarter, and as such are more valuable than the slightness of their contents^{ancient} lead us at first to suppose.

Eusebius of Caesarea was contemporaneous with these events and therefore his work must be regarded as actually a document, being the revelation of the self-consciousness of some portions of the Church of the period.

His violent hero-worship of Constantine causes the prudent historian to pause, however, before accepting what he says too literally lest his enthusiasm should lead him to give the Emperor a greater part in happenings than he actually had. So tested, however, ^{his work reveals} ~~it emerges~~ that he was a honest recorder of events as he saw them, and at times even ~~his~~ ^{of his,} statements which seem most challengable, as for example ^{that of} ~~as to~~ the Emperor's dominance in the Nicaean debates, appear ^{most} true. He was credited by the Orthodox with a taste for equivocation, but in point of fact he would appear to be credulous and simple. He was hypnotised by his hero, and saw Constantine ~~this~~ at his best and as Constantine wished to be seen. We thus can read in his writings something of the effect produced by that emperor upon the simpler Churchmen, and making allowance for this characteristic, we gain from his writings valuable clues to the truth.

Lactantius is the reputed author of "De Morte Persecutorum", and this work and the Institutes provide us with light upon the early part of this period. Rufinus wrote a history of this time, following the work of Eusebius and continuing it to the reign of Julian. He is not very reliable until he approaches the closing period of ^{the} Constantians' reign, ^{is captivated by all romantic tales} and lacks generally a sense of the relative importance of events. Socrates wrote in the beginning of the following century. He was a layman and impartial. He knew well the traditions of Constantinople in which he lived. He had an unprejudiced conception of the Novatians and, although he recorded some improbabilities ^{chiefly through the influence of Rufinus,} he had in general good judgment. Sozomen was also an Eastern, of Gaza in Palestine. A great dependence exists between him and Socrates, and certain stories examined in detail reveal that it was Sozomen who was the copyist. In certain passages he shows independence but often it would seem

not on account of other evidence but of personal conjecture. The test case is in Socrates V.19, Sozomen VII.16, where the latter has clearly tried to reproduce the story of the former with amplifications which might make it plain to himself, but with a total misunderstanding of the situation. Theodoret continues the story of Eusebius with the obvious intention of correcting errors in Socrates and Sozomen. His view-point is that of Antioch, and although he makes a praise-worthy effort to produce abundant documentary evidence, he ^{is} ~~was~~ not always happy in his selections. Philostorgius gives us the Arian point of view. He has, according to our opinion, a better chronology in many places than the three previous writers. His epitomizer has perhaps only preserved his most violent and extravagant statements. The result is, at all events, that strong feeling destroys largely the value of his work. Sulpicius Severus is nearer to events than Socrates, Sozomen, or Theodoret, belonging like Philostorgius ^{to} ~~of~~ the second half of the 4th century. His history has a literary tone, but its brevity obscures important details, and his credulity causes him to narrate some absurdities.

Optatus who wrote also in the fourth century, is our great authority for the events of the Donatist controversy.

Augustine tells us that his writings were valued by the Donatists themselves. That great theologian, ^{also himself} in certain letters provides us with useful material. Original documents as to this episode are to be found collected in Migne's Cursus Vol.VIII. p.673 ff. The documents from p.750 ff. contain the point of view of the Donatists themselves.

The most important heathen writers upon the period are:-

Victor Aurelius, who wrote about 360 a History of the Caesars to that date, and a younger writer of the same name who continued this work to the time of Theodosius ^{under the title, "The Life & Character of the Emperors"}. These works are fair-minded and

acute in their judgments. Perhaps the cleverest analysis of the characters of the different Constantians is to be found in them. Eutropius is concise also and so impartial, that it is doubtful whether he is not actually Christian. These writers state the opinion of these rulers from a heathen or neutral point of view without undue prejudice. In this they contrast with Zosimus who is a century later in time. His view is that Christianity corrupted the Empire, and his work is rather a polemic than a true narrative. His opinions of Constantine cannot be reconciled with other views given of him, and it is valuable that we have in the Aurelii and Eutropius the judgment of other pagans, whereby we may understand the prejudice of this work. Ammianus Marcellinus born about 330 A.D., deals with Constantius and Julian. He is on the whole fair, and acute in his judgments, but some passion enters into his work. In his enthusiasm for Julian he may paint Constantius too darkly. Towards Christianity generally he is however broadminded and generally just. His work creates a favourable personal impression of the writer and from it one can read the attitude of the old faith to Christianity. He is free, however, from the atmosphere of mere spite or of false construction.

There is also to be considered the evidence of the Panegyrists. We have four eulogies addressed to Constantine, one on his marriage, two by Eumenius 309, and 311^{A.D.} and one by Nazarius 321⁴⁷. These are collected in Migne Patrolog. Cursus Vol. VIII. pp. 581 ff. This type of rhetoric is not of great historical value from its nature, but indications of a suggestive sort are to be found in them. There are two Panegyrics upon the Emperor Constantius from the pen of his successor Julian, and also one upon Constantine II. by an unknown author. Upon Julian we have the important eulogy of Libanius and also two invectives of Gregory

Nazianzen, which, from the historians' point of view, are similar types of writing. Panegyrics corrected by Invectives do however yield a certain amount of evidence for ^{their} ~~his~~ purposes.

In addition to these ancient writings many modern works dealing with this subject or with special aspects of it have been consulted. The more important of these are:-

Hefele Concil. ~~in~~ Geschichte (tr. Clark Edinburgh 1871)

Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Bury's Edit.

Schiller's Geschichte der Römischen Kaiserzeit (Gotha 1887).

Seeck: - Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt. (Berlin. 1911)

Burckhardt's Die Zeit Constantins (Leipzig 1880).

Boissier. Fin du Paganisme. (Paris 1891)

Beugnot. Histoire de la Destruction du Paganisme. (Paris 1835).

Battifol. La Paix Constantinienne (Paris 1914)

Etudes d'Histoire (Paris 1904)

L'Eglise Naissante (Paris 1922)

Schm. Verhältnis von Staat und Kirche (Tübingen 1873)

Harnack Dogmen's Geschichte

Mission and Expansion of Christianity (tr. London 1908)

Das Mönchthum Ideale und Geschichte.

Geffcken Church and State. (trans. London 1877).

Hobhouse. The Church and the World in Idea and History (London 1910)

Troeltsch. Die Soziallehren der Christlichen

Kirchen and Gruppen (Tübingen 1923).

Grand probleme der Ethik Bd. 2. 1913.

(For elucidation of his thought Von Hügel Essays and Addresses

(London 1921) Sleigh, Sufficiency of Christianity Edinburgh 1923)

have been consulted).

Stanley's History of the Eastern Church. (London 1894)

Warde Fowler's Religious Experience of the Roman People (London 1911)

~~Edward Caird. Evolution of Theology in Greek Philosophy. (Glasgow 1903)~~

~~John G. Jones. Church and~~

Ferrero. Greatness and Decline of Rome.

Westcott. *The Two Empires, The Church and the World* (Commentary on *Epiph.* of St. John. 250ff.)

Glover's *Fourth Century Letters*. (Cambridge 1901)

Gwatkin's *Arian Controversy, and other works*.

.. *Studies of Arianism* (Cambridge 1900)

De Broglie, *L'Eglise et l'empire Romain*. Paris 1859.

Rendall. *Emperor Julian, Hulsean Essay*.

Rode: *Geschichte des ^{Reaction} Regens Julian* (Jena 1877).

Gardner. *Julian Philosopher and Emperor*. London 1906.

Chinnock: *Notes on Julian + Translation of Public Letters*. London 1901

Athanasius: *Festal Letters*, Burgess. Oxford 1854.

On Athanasius life etc.

.. *General Works*, Library of Fathers. Newman ed, *Notes and Introduction*

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CHAPTER I.

THE RELATIONS OF THE CHURCH AND STATE PREVIOUS TO THE
EDICT OF MILAN.



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Recently the opinion has been criticised that the persecution of Christianity was a settled and considered policy of the Roman government. It is probably true that the first organised attack made upon believers owed its origin to the machinations of a Nero, attempting to escape the personal suspicion aroused by his own misdeeds. Nevertheless the persecutors belonged to that class of sovereign whose care for the duties of their office was most pronounced. The Antonines ~~and Marcus Aurelius~~ caused more sorrow to the Church than even a blood-thirsty Domitian, and it was Septimius Severus,¹ an African whom one might suppose to have no inherited love for the Roman gods, who committed to the Prefects of the city the definite duty of preventing ~~all~~ all unlawful assemblies, *a law which was specially designed against such as those of the Christians.* The consequent effect upon the Church was one of her severest trials. This resolute attempt to comb out all believers resulted, however, in the discovery of their unexpected numerical strength, and in the revelation of the bold defiance, with which even the women among them could face such assaults upon their loyalty. This strict and energetic action could not therefore be continued long, even although the laws of Severus remained unrepealed. Alexander Septimius definitely favoured the new cult,⁽²⁾ and is said to have contemplated the erection of a Temple to Christ among the fanes of Rome. Later⁽³⁾ Philip, the Arabian, is actually reported to have become a Christian in communion with the Church. The story reads, however, like a

1. Euseb. Ch. Hist VI. 2. Lampridius. Alex. Sever. § 29. 3. Euseb. l.c. § 34.

mere legend, with a moral designed, perhaps, for the correction of clerics, in the age which is now our special study. It is said that on an occasion he wished to share with the multitude in the prayers of the church, but the bishop in office would not let him do so, until he confessed his sins and took his place among the penitents. Eusebius perhaps owed this story however to a Donatist of his own time.

Under favouring monarchs, despite the set-back of intervening persecutors, the Christian Church gained in numbers and prestige. In particular she won to her side numbers from the wealthy and influential classes, and gave evidence of native power to overcome the world. Throughout the time of war and of peace she maintained her own internal organisation, and it speedily became manifest what authority her constituted governors had. The Emperor Decius, in the middle of the third century, saw the civil menace of the new religion, and proceeded to attack it, no longer in a partial and local way, but by a strenuous and systematic war upon it. The edict was that all Christians were to sacrifice by a certain day or be handed to torture. Governors of provinces were ordered to search out every recusant, and put in force every possible means to terrify them back ^{into} ~~to~~ allegiance to the ancient gods.

We are told that Decius had an acute perception of the danger which Christian rule threatened against established Roman Government. (1) "He heard much more tolerantly and patiently that a rival prince had risen against him than that a priest of God had been appointed at Rome." His attitude was not without insight from the point of view of Imperial authority, for, as the result of a long period of affliction, the Christian body had developed a self-consciousness, which really constituted it as a separate nation in

(1) Cyprian. Ep. 55 & 59.

the midst of the people of the Empire.

In discussing the earliest relations of Church and State, it is essential that we should free our minds from the developed ideas, which those terms now suggest to us, ideas clarified by centuries of inter-relation.

The State, from the point of view of a Decius, was not a secular body in our sense of the term. As a ruler he conceived it to be his sacred duty to preserve not merely civil peace within the Empire and peace with her foes upon her borders, but to maintain peace with the gods. The Jus Divinum was an important part of his legislative work. The operative conception of Roman religion was that expressed in the prayer of the Carmen Saeculare:-

Si Palatinas videt aequus arces | remque
Romanam Latiumque felix | alterum lustrum
meliusque semper | prorogat aevum.

Spec. this in
4 lines

Augustus inaugurated the empire with a devout restoration of heathen worship upon the principle, accepted by all Romans, that the safety of State demanded a religious populace. To the spiritual mind of Vergil, as to the materialistic Cicero, this was axiomatic. Piety and patriotism were with them two inseparable thoughts, and Julius himself, along with Polybius and Strabo, are examples of men who, thinking little of religion in itself, deemed it an invaluable part of practical statesmanship. Thus, whatever view of the deities was taken, whether that they, if placated could and did further the ends of empire, or that these ends were furthered by the very fact that the populace gave them fear and reverence, the care of religion was an essential ^{duty} ~~part~~ of the rulers of the Empire. Not only so but from the beginning, the wise statesmanship of the founder of the imperial throne took measures to secure to himself and his successors such offices, as that of the Censorship and of the Pontificate, know-

.) See Warde Fowler. Religious Experience of Roman people. Lect. VIII, XVIII + XIX + passim.

ing that in these lay the authority of autocracy, if they could become vested in one ruler. Technically, the Emperor was merely commander of the army and governor-general of the provinces, but the man in such offices, who was accorded by the Senate the rank of chief officer of State in morals, in religion, and other departments, became what we now understand by an autocratic Emperor of the Roman type.⁽¹⁾ Even so, however, the 'Purple' could not have retained its power, or have secured the due awe of the people, without higher assumptions still, and Caesar-godhead was made a cult, and became a main tenet of Roman piety and patriotism. Such a faith was in fact the culmination, or reductio ad absurdum if one will, of the process of Roman religion. This had always been towards the socialisation of divine worship, the absorption of each movement of the free religious consciousness into a system of legalised and ordered acts. The State had a horror of all that was not systematised and brought into strict line with the ordered system of Government. Not only Christianity but private augury was feared and hated as potentially seditious. Thus, in making the Divinity at last Rome itself, personified in its Emperor, it came to the end of its chosen path. It fulfilled its root-principle of making of religion, "a justice towards the gods"⁽²⁾, to be legislated and systematised into a part of State procedure, like all other kinds of justice. The genius of the Roman abhorred ~~not merely~~ ^{and essentially} as unsocial, ~~but as essentially~~ irreligious, any sect which did not do honour, whether they believed in them or not, to the gods and above all to the Caesar-god who stood for the Empire and its world-peace founded upon ordered Governments.

Now to the Christians, the Emperor was not god, nor Pontifex Maximus, nor even moral censor. The Roman conception of religion with its State gods, Jupiter Capitolinus, Janus and Vesta, had not

1.) Gibbon. *Decline & Fall*. ch. III. (2.) The phrase is Cicero's in *De Natura Deorum*.

even counterparts in the sphere of their ideas. They did not worship God for the purpose of keeping Heaven propitious to the general State. ~~It is doubtful indeed if the Church had ^{yet} any conception of a general duty towards the ~~body~~ ^{state as such,} of people among whom she dwelt.~~ A political influence was out of power and therefore out of mind. The normal conception of the Church was not that of the whole body of Christendom including Church and State, but rather a national consciousness, *limited to the Church herself.*

The Jewish hierarchy had ever claimed in face of earthly rulers a spiritual prerogative. The teaching, from which Christianity had taken initiation, operated with the ideas of a Divine Kingdom and a *Messianic* Ruler. The body of believers represented in their own conceptions Israel according to ^{the} spirit, and although the time was not yet, they awaited the visible establishment of this new rule, as a hegemony of all the peoples of the earth in fulfilment of ancient prophecy. St. Paul had found the Roman government favourable, making him regard it as a power of restraint, set providentially over ^{the} Jewish Anti-Christ. St. Peter equally called for honour to the King, and the ^{writers} ~~writings~~ of the history of Jesus reported Him as recommending the payment of divine dues to God and earthly dues to Caesar. They felt that they were driven into mental exile from the Jewish commonwealth, but they lived in the Roman at first as under protection of powers, girded to this task, like Cyrus of old, by One they knew not. The persecution of the faith by the Emperors drove them forth once more, however, and made them a "third race". They received this title from the heathen ^{also took it to} and ~~from~~ themselves. Their aloofness from the social life of their neighbours provided a ready reason for this, and the history of their origin prepared the way for such a conception. The Jewish Dispersion had gathered around it prior to the mission of Christianity a numerous body of

Gentile proselytes who were not circumcised and did not practise the Law in all its strictness, of whom the centurion, Cornelius, was a type. To Judaism these persons remained impure and foreign, unless they would accept the rite by which alone, in its conception, they could become true children of Abraham. Among these, however, Christianity made great progress, accepting them by baptism and confession into Israel after the spirit, although ^{were} they still repudiated by Israel after the flesh. By circumcision they would have become sharers in Jewish national life, and so it was natural to conceive of themselves as forming a new race when they became incorporated into the Christian body, ⁽¹⁾ especially since these proselyte societies were ~~staked in Stoicism and its ideals of cosmopolitanism and democracy which alienated them from the existing State.~~ ⁽²⁾ The name, "Third Race", was one moreover with which they were reviled by their opponents. Celsus accused them of a revolt against the common-weal (*στρατιάειν πρὸς τὸ κοινόν*) and Tertullian quotes as a shout of the circus, "How long are we to endure this third race"? Even when they would defend themselves from the implied accusation of lack of patriotism and civic feeling, the Apologists rather betray their sense of aloofness than dispel it. Tertullian resents bitterly the name "third race", but in his view it is impossible for a Christian to accept any civil magistracy, or post in the army; and the idea of an Emperor ever being a Christian is to him almost absurd. ⁽³⁾ The use of oaths, the pomp of secular power, and the close relation of all civil office with the heathen creed were of course the causes of this pessimistic view of public life.

The views of Origen on this subject have been well summarised in these words, ⁽⁴⁾ "Christians are true benefactors of their country when they train the citizens in piety to God, and induce them to be faithful as citizens here, by inspiring them with the hope of heavenly citizenship. Except in this indirect way,

⁽³⁾ Tertullian Scorpiace, X., Apol. I. 42.

⁽⁴⁾ See ~~Rev.~~ Patrick's Apology of Origen. Blackwood, Edin. 1892, p. 271, 272.

1) cf. Battifol *l'Eglise Naissante* p. 18 ff. (2) *Tractat Socialisme* (p. 57-8)

Christians do not take part in political life. To their duty as citizens of heaven everything else must be subordinated. For this end they sever themselves from those who are estranged from the divine commonwealth; they dare not lose their inheritance in God over all. If the Lacedaemonian ambassadors refused to do obeisance at the Court of Persia, on account of their reverence for their only Master, the law of Lycurgus, much less can the ambassadors of Christ whose office is greater and diviner, do homage to any other authority. In each city we recognise another national organisation - a divine country - which has been formed by the Word of God. Its rulers are men powerful in word and pure in life. They are appointed not because of their anxiety for power, but rather when, from excess of modesty, they are unwilling to undertake the care of the Churches. The rulers themselves discharge their office at the impulse of the great King - the Son of God. The law of God is their only standard."

This reference to the ecclesiastical hierarchy as on a level with the courts and officials of the Empire, and administering a higher and more authoritative law than that of the State, became, in some writers, emphasised in a way yet more unflattering to the secular organisation.

Hippolytus⁽¹⁾ puts it in the form that ^{the} Empire was a Satanic imitation of the formation of the Lord's kingdom. "That is the reason", he argues, "why the first census took place under Augustus when our Lord was born at Bethlehem; it was to get the men of this world enrolled for our earthly king called Romans, while those who believed in a heavenly King were termed Christians, bearing on their foreheads the sign of victory over death."

Such principles had been evolved in the Christian Church and, although some believers ⁽²⁾ might hope for a possibility of union

(1) On Daniel IV.9.

(2) e.g. Justin Martyr, Melito others. see ~~p. 22~~ of this Thesis.
Chap. III

between Church and State, in the hour of conflict with civil authority they had all this consciousness of complete independence, to rid them of any danger of allowing tyrannical interference with their spiritual affairs. The Emperor might destroy their bodies, but with their principles and laws he could not deal, nor could he shake them from their allegiance, not only to their unseen Lord, but to His visible representatives, their bishops and priests. They had no hope or intention of seeking to overthrow the State by armed rebellion. The idea of the ultimate triumph of the faith, coming through an immediate revelation of the Triumphant Christ, receded somewhat into the back ground of their thought; but meantime they organised themselves as an independent people in a thorough and systematic manner. The form of legislation and government might be modelled upon those of the Roman State, but it was as completely independent of it, as only an illegal and outlawed association can be. The Church imposed her own laws upon her members, elected her own office-bearers, and formed her constitution in the most complete kind of liberty. The State might harry and persecute her, but her internal policy was utterly beyond reach of its influences. The bargains made by outlaws among themselves, can never be revised by constituted courts. When Roman Law dubbed Christianity a "religio illicita" it conferred upon the Church, or rather confirmed to it, its principles of complete antonomy, and spiritual independence. Her members not only faced martyrdom boldly, but legislated heroically for the Church, and reared her up into a powerful organised State within a hostile State. She kept up, by a system of communicatory letters and district synods, unity and mutual understanding between scattered communities, and evolved a powerful, and respected hierarchy of spiritual rulers. The very aloofness of the civil power

had thus bred a spirit of ^{almost} complete isolation from the Empire.

There was therefore within the territory of the Roman government a rival state occupying the same territory and, moreover, the rival was the more progressive and the more democratic power. The "third race" had indeed cheated the Empire of its heritage. Loyalty was strong in their midst. Where the Empire had merely universal laws, they had a bond of true brotherhood. Where the State official ruled by force, the bishop's mere displeasure could throw his flock into profound agitation. A plebeian's martyred bones received devout honours of reverence such as no dead Caesar ever won even from those who believed in his apotheosis. In peaceful days the solidity of the sacred fellowship grew by leaps and bounds. The State must stamp out this formidable rival, or be completely overcome by it.

Plainly however suppression was impossible. The Christians were too many and too resolute. Another policy was therefore tried and in 259 A.D. the faith was made a permitted religion within the Empire. This was a position of truce or armistice. No attempt was made to secure any understanding or alliance. The next step to be expected might be an effort to bring it within the circle of Roman ideas, but that time was not yet. The truce endured for some fifty years during which the Church increased in numbers to such an extent, especially in the East, that alarm caused a fresh outbreak of persecution. Diocletian was then Emperor, one of the ablest of rulers, and one who was the originator of several innovations of government. He considered that the unwieldy Empire could not be ruled by one man alone and associated with himself Maximian as his colleague, and later, took the important step of elevating to a subordinate imperial position, with the title,

"Caesar"^{his} possible rivals, Galerius and Constantius Chlorus. His policy was throughout a definitely Roman one, but yet for nineteen years of his reign he never interfered with the Church members, who were in his palace and about his person, and were excused from attending heathen sacrifices.⁽¹⁾ The wife and daughter of the Emperor were regarded as secret believers, and at this time the Church buildings of the Christians became, as at Nicomedia, conspicuous for size and grandeur among the pagan temples. Galerius, however, the Caesar of the East, found the new faith a great problem in his dominions, and suspected its devotees to be jealous of the privileges of their Western brethern.⁽²⁾ At all events, whether from policy or superstition, he played upon the feelings of Diocletian by various devices in such a way as made him, though reluctant, bring in severe persecuting decrees against Christianity. Oracles were tampered with, it is alleged, to convince the wavering Emperor, and accordingly in 303 A.D. a bitter attack was made upon the faith.⁽³⁾ Four edicts came out in rapid succession, one forbade assemblies of Christians, confiscated their books and buildings, and permitted them to be tortured until they recanted; the second ordered all clerics to be imprisoned; the third offered them release on consent to sacrifice; while the fourth edict, in the following year, offered simply the choice of death or sacrifice. A vivid description of the persecution is given by Lactantius. "Presbyters and other officials were seized and led to execution. In burning alive, there was no distinction made of age or sex, and because of the great multitude, they were not burned one after the other, but a herd of them were encircled by the same fire. Judges, dispersed through all the Temples, sought to compel everyone to sacrifice. The prisons were crowded, tortures hitherto unknown were invented. Thus all the

(1) Euseb.Ch.Hist.VIII, I.

(2) Some writers credit Diocletian himself however with the initiation of the persecution (e.g. Boëssier, *La Fin du Paganisme* p.15).

(3) For story of persecution see Euseb.Ch.Hist.VIII, and Lactantius, *De Mort. Persecutorum*).

earth was afflicted from East to West, except in the territories of Gaul."

Diocletian, in ill health, abdicated in 305, but the cruel work went on under Galerius for some six more years, and old men, young women, and tender children were not saved ^{from} the fiercest effects of the wave of hatred, which now swept over the Church. Only, as already noted in Gaul, did any tolerable situation exist for the Christians. The reason of this was that Constantius Chlorus, the Caesar of Gaul, under Diocletian, adopted a lenient reading of the Edicts of the Augusti, and though he pulled down buildings, he did not immerse his hands in blood. (1) ~~This~~ ^{Chlorus} had been indeed the first policy of Diocletian himself, with regard to this matter. When on the resignation of Diocletian, ~~he~~ ^{Chlorus} became Augustus, and colleague of Galerius, it is probable that he ceased persecuting entirely, thus accounting for those authorities who exclude him from the rank of the afflicters of the faithful. We may well believe that ^{he} ~~Constantius Chlorus~~ was free from unreasonable prejudices against Christianity, such as existed in many pagan minds. He was probably better acquainted with the nature of the new religion than some of his colleagues, since he had many of its devotees in his army, attracted probably by his forbearing attitude towards them. It is also perfectly credible that he preferred their steadfast courage, to the easy allegiance of some of his other soldiers, who were men of no principles whatever, but would accept whatever religion their general pleased. (2) He was certainly not a Christian himself. The picture which his illustrious son gave to Eusebius (3) of his household, has no doubt been highly coloured by the imperial imagination. We may conjecture that he was a monotheist, reverencing one supreme God, under the image of Apollo or Mithras, for the Sun god is the favourite

(1)

So Lact. Morte Persecut. XV.

(2)

Euseb. V. C. I. 16.

(3)

V. C. I. 18.

device of his coins. We can without great danger credit him with a sincere piety, since Constantine, in the famous story of his conversion, could scarcely have introduced his father's name in the setting in which it there occurs, unless his monotheistic faith had been something more than a mere vague philosophical belief. He probably did not regard Polytheism as sinful, but may have looked on it as to some extent expressive of the truth with regard to the deity. He perhaps, indeed, believed in the existence of many lesser gods, although he had selected one supreme God as alone worthy to receive his worship. With such a faith it was natural that he would see little that was vicious, in the beliefs of the Christians. He never had under his control such large destinies, as made it necessary for him to evolve a settled policy of his own. His action, in connection with the various repressive measures of his time, was like that of a liberal-minded and humane man, who mitigated the severities of his superiors on behalf of those under his special charge. How far his sympathies would have carried him, had he been at the real helm of the State, remains unknown.

After the death of Constantius Chlorus in 306, his son Constantine continued his policy in the West. This young man was born in the year 272 or 274 A.D., probably at Naissus. About the year 292, he was sent to the Court of Diocletian, where he remained practically in the position of a hostage for his father's allegiance. He would be open there to ~~every~~ Christian influence as we have shown, and would see for ten years the effect of Diocletian's first Church policy, of, as it were, negligent toleration. He took part in the Egyptian expedition of 296, and accompanied the senior Emperor on his passage through Palestine, where he was seen for the first time by his biographer, and passionate admirer, Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, who speaks of him as, commanding universal admiration, by

the indications which he gave even then, of royal greatness.⁽¹⁾

On the resignation of the purple, by Diocletian and Maximian in 305, when Constantius Chlorus and Galerius succeeded to the title of Augusti, Constantine no doubt expected elevation to the rank of 'Caesar', but of this honour he was disappointed, through the election of Severus and Daza. According to the historian Lactantius,⁽²⁾ this slight to the favourite of the army, caused universal amazement. Constantine felt that his position at court was no longer tolerable, and made efforts to leave. Galerius, however, did not mean to allow so valuable a hostage to slip easily through his hands, and several times refused the request of Constantius that his son might be allowed to join him. At length, however, when the Augustus of the West became so ill that his recovery was despaired of, Constantine received permission, one evening, to set out for Gaul. Having learned early the value of immediate action, he departed immediately on the receipt of the warrant, and when the fickle Emperor would have detained him on the morrow, he was already far upon his way. The health of Constantius so far recovered as to permit of his making an expedition to Britain, but there he died at York in 306, whereupon his son was declared his successor to the title of Augustus. There was little likelihood of this election being recognised by the other wearers of the purple, and so when Galerius agreed to accept the validity of his claim to Caesarship, Constantine was content with the inferior dignity.

From 306 to 311 A.D., Constantine thus continued the Church policy of his father in his Western province, i.e. the bold tolerant policy of 305 A.D. onwards, not the restricted persecution of his Caesarship. The holders of the purple would be glad to leave him to his own will, so long as he was content with the lesser imperial dignity. The accession of his father to the rank of Augustus would

(1) Euseb. V.C.I. 19.

(2) ^{Persecut.}
De Mort. ~~Persecut.~~ XIX.

seem to have been the occasion of public rejoicing among the Christians, (perhaps the occasion of the Synod of Elvira)⁽¹⁾; and to rob these auspices of their favourable hopes, would be an error which ^{the} Caesar was far too wise to commit. Hosius, an able prelate of Spain, had been ^{in all probability} a trusted adviser of his father,⁽²⁾ and we may conjecture, would continue to be regarded by Constantine as a useful mentor. The continued respect in which that bishop was held by him throughout his life, makes the pre-supposition of such an early friendship, a certainty. Moreover, while the Caesar had the loyalty of his Christian subjects, and saw their readiness to support a ruler of sympathetic feelings, he may have felt that there lay to his hand, in professed patronage of the Church, a powerful lever whereby he might elevate himself to such a supreme place in the State as his ambition dictated. He must have heard the principles of Diocletian statesmanship in the days of ^{that emperor's} full vigour of mind, ^{or} ~~but~~ it may have been evolved by his own genius to decide, that mere tolerant negligence was a feeble policy, and useless to restrain the alienation of the Church from the Empire. He may also have detected the errors of Diocletian's creation of rival imperial posts, and conceived that the future of the State lay under one ruler, with deputies entirely subordinate, while the loyalty and obedience of the people might be secured by putting Christianity under a felt obligation, of a binding sort, to the Emperor. If such ideas were in his mind, the time was not yet ripe to execute them. The affairs of the Empire were in considerable confusion, as there were four Augusti, and two Caesars. The death of Severus made no diminution in number, since Licinius succeeded him. The brutal Galerius however, who was the back-bone of the persecution, found in 310 ^{that} the task of massacring ^{was} disgusting even to his cruel mind. To destroy all Christians, meant to decimate the population of the Empire. Worn out by the

(1) See Hefele's conjecture for the date of this Synod. Concilien Geschichte, Vol. I. p. 132 (tr. Clark, Edin. 1871).

(2) See letter of Hosius to Constantius quoted p. 4 of this Thesis.

struggle and by illness, Galerius surrendered to the unconquerable force of non-resisting patience, and in conjunction with Licinius and Constantine, published an edict of toleration at Nicomedia, which document has been preserved, and is worthy of study, as an indication of the Church policy, which had come to be accepted by the devotees of the older method of dealing with Christianity.

The edict was as follows:-(1)"The Emperor Caesar Galerius, Constantinus and Licinius to the people of their provinces, greeting. Among our other regulations for the permanent advantage of the common weal, we have hitherto studied to reduce all things to conformity with the ancient laws and public discipline of the Romans, and to provide that the Christians also, who have abandoned the religion of their fore-fathers, should return to a good disposition. For in some way, (2) such arrogance had seized them, and such stupidity had taken possession of them, that they did not follow the ancient institutions, which perhaps their own ancestors had established, but according to their own purposes and as each one desired, made laws (3) for themselves, and observed them, and assembled various congregations in various places. When we had issued this decree that they should return to the institutions established by the ancients, many were subdued through the fear of danger, but many being harassed were exposed to danger, and since many continue in the same opinion, (same folly Euseb.) and we perceive that they neither pay reverence, or due worship to the heavenly gods, nor pay regard to their own God, therefore we, from our wonted clemency by which we are accustomed to pardon all, have determined to pardon these men also, and to allow them again to be Christians, and to rebuild their meeting places, on condition, that nothing be done contrary to good order, (contra disciplinam). In another mandate we shall signify to the magistrates what they have to observe.

Wherefore on account of this indulgence of ours, it will be the duty

(1) See Latin Text, *Mort. Persecut. of Lactantius*, XXXIV and Greek Text in Eusebius Church History, VIII, 17.

(2) See Lactantius, and some M.S. of Euseb.

(3) This phrase betrays the reason of the State's fear.

of the Christians to pray to their God for our welfare, and for that of the commonwealth and their own; that the commonwealth may be preserved safe in every quarter, and that they may live securely in their homes."

This Edict may be regarded as officially the publication of defeat. In the realms of Constantine, Maxentius, and Licinius, where the persecution had not been in active operation, we do not read its force properly, and in consequence may attach to it greater significance, according to its mere words, than it really has. Schiller, for example, errs greatly in thinking that the Edict of Milan did not exceed it in favour to the Christians. Comparing it with the Milan⁽¹⁾ document however we note that in the latter there is reference to certain conditions which must have been attached which were then deemed "hard", "foreign to imperial clemency" and not allowing "everyone full freedom to devote his mind to whatever religion he thought best suited to himself". By them Christians could not be said to enjoy "full freedom" but an attempt had been made "to narrow this by the exclusion of certain ranks".

Such 'preferential treatment' is not mentioned in the text of the Decree of Nicomedia itself but the way is prepared for it by the closing words, "that nothing be done contrary to discipline", and the promise of an explanatory mandate. A further letter of Licinius and Constantius associated with Maximin Daza must have been issued. Galerius had died within a few days of the publication of the Nicomedian Decree. According to one report Maximin, his successor, would have evaded the pardon altogether had his hand not been stayed by letters from the West, but the story must be a mere conjectured explanation of his

(1) Chapter II p. 3 of this thesis.

tolerance. His action is worthy of study because its failures probably suggested to his colleagues the lines of their distinctive Milan policy. We have from the hands of Eusebius⁽¹⁾ three documents relating to his attitude towards Christianity. The first of these is a sufficiently frank declaration that no Christians are to be molested in their worship. The reasons alleged are that the matter is not sufficiently important to justify the endangering of their lives and that they are too obstinate to be convinced even by violence. So plain an admission of defeat, we are not surprised to hear, was the occasion of wide-spread rejoicing, and the bands of liberated prisoners, singing psalms on their homeward way, is possibly the vivid touch of an eye witness in our historian's narrative. The second document, on its own admission, is not entire and by the contents of the third it would appear that it has been robbed of its most important sentences. As it comes to us, it contains a defence of Heathenism upon the stock Roman principles of apologetic, namely its results in national prosperity, and it concludes after a lacuna by granting a request, ^{which had been} ~~evidently~~ made, that if the Christians ^{would} ~~will~~ not be convinced by such reasoning they ^{might} ~~may~~ be driven out from the midst of their god-reverencing neighbours. If the third document is sincere, the omitted portion must have been an appeal to the heathen officials to deal with them, however, "by exhortations and blandishments" and not by violence, in which case expulsion would be a last resort. The allegations of severe dealings, which Eusebius ^{have} makes, reference, we may therefore take it, to repressive measures taken in certain localities, perhaps because of the Christians' exultation in their manifest victory. It seems evident that in certain cities wholesale expulsions of Christians were ordered, and we know that there were several martyrdoms. There would seem also to have been a determined anti-Christian propaganda, certain forged

(1)

Ch. History, IX, 1, 2 & 9.

"Acts of Pilate" being taught in the schools.

Maximin's attitude would seem thus to have been a conjunction of the cessation of persecution with the commencement of a vigorous ^{educational} propaganda.⁽¹⁾ Its results were such dispeace as caused expulsions and executions in many quarters. The Nicomedian decree is well represented in such a policy, and its failure might therefore become apparent. Events were however moving rapidly. No sooner had Galerius died, than with the swiftness of a prepared plan, Constantine made a bid for supreme power in the West. He secured the neutrality of Licinius and advanced upon Rome. It was always an act of courtesy to represent a movement against that city, not as an attack, but as a liberation. Consequently we cannot attach importance to the fact that Maxentius was dubbed a tyrant, and the movement of Constantine, a patriotic and religious action for the deliverance of the ancient city. Christian writers, however, throw emphasis upon this aspect of his declaration of war, and construe his motives in a sense which would leave no place for the promptings of ambition. He had great foresight and a genius for anticipation, however, and his action was perhaps dictated principally by a policy of self-defence. At the same time his ambition was no small factor in the forces which influenced his conduct, and it is very probable that he was not slow to take the opportunity of making a bid for fuller empire. Whatever his motive, he proved himself an able general, routing the enemies' cavalry at Turin, and again at Brescia, and continuing his victorious march to the very walls of the capital, where he dealt the decisive blow at the battle of Milvian Bridge, in October 311 A.D. In the course of this engagement, Maxentius was hurled into the river Tiber and drowned, leaving Constantine in victorious possession of the Empire of the West. A little later Licinius made an attack upon his Eastern colleague, Maximin, which resulted in the Empire becoming settled under

(1) Julian's policy was almost a repetition of this and even in his short reign disturbances were frequent. (See Chapter XIV.)

Constantine and Licinius, victorious survivors of a plethora of emperors.

The opportunity came now to these rulers to publish their Church policy without fear. Despite the greater motive the Eastern Empire had to adopt a new attitude towards Christianity, it was probably the statesmanship of Constantine which devised one. A double argument proves this, ^{therefore} the personal inability of Licinius subsequently to maintain this policy, and the conviction afterwards shown by Constantine that it was not entirely suitable for the East. To the Western Emperor ^{therefore} is probably due the credit of suggesting the new policy which we have now to consider. It might appear wise in view of past failures to take the bold step of abandoning all hostility to the Christian faith, and ^{to} accept the new cult as part of the Jus Divinium of Rome, and a means of keeping the Heavenly Powers at peace with the Empire. Politically, ~~if it is to be judged merely politically,~~ it would be a wise move, and one likely to keep the Empire in life for centuries, low as her vitality had become. Morally it would be a great act of humanity and the acknowledgment of a powerful ethical force. Religiously it would be revelation of a certain degree of enlightenment. We have no reason to suppose but that, when it became actual, all these motives entered into it, even if we conceive of Constantine as reverencing one God under the image of Apollo or the Sun god, according to his father's faith. Worked out by him with a touch of genius and with a growing appreciation of the Christian position, it was destined to have a wonderful success, although experience suggested modifications. As put in practice woodenly, and probably suspiciously by Licinius, and in conditions, favourable to a still bolder policy, it proved a failure. A failure, as it was first conceived, it ~~must~~ ^{was} finally ^{to} prove, since Christianity could not be absorbed into Roman legal machinery and still remain the Church. Nevertheless by the union of the twin sovereign powers which it established in alliance, the civilisation of the future was to be moulded, guided and preserved.

CHAPTER II.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL POLICY OF CONSTANTINE WHILE AUGUSTUS

~~only~~ ONLY OF THE WEST.



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The policy which Constantine adopted with regard to his Christian subjects has been the subject of much discussion and of considerable misrepresentation. The most superficial accounts, naming him as the first Christian emperor, assume that he was a full convert to the faith from the beginning, and that he entered into relations with the Church possessing a full sense of the meaning of the faith, and ^{also} a trained conception ~~of modern Christian opinion, as~~ ^{of} her identity as a Church distinct from the State. Even if he were a full Christian, he could not have in his mind ideas which had not yet been formed, far less formulated. We have described the community-consciousness of Christians as that of a third race. He, as Roman Emperor, could not think of himself ^{in such a relation,} ~~as~~ but any other idea was vague and in process of development. The significant fact that he postponed baptism until death, and when baptised laid aside the purple, is itself proof of the strength of the former idea of the Church, which it was his life-work to modify. Psychologically it mastered him to the end, although politically it was his task to seek to establish a view totally at variance with it. It was therefore impossible for him to let the dictates of his own religious promptings sway the policy of his office in relation to Church matters. Thus the discussion of the relation of Church and State in his times requires something more than a mere enquiry into his personal attitude to religion. On this latter question it is impossible apparently to reach now a definite conclusion. Theories vary from ideas that he was a devout believer who modified his actions only to mete out universal justice, to allegations that he was a complete

atheist and secret scoffer who pretended belief to win the support
 of the powerful clerics. Too few, in our opinion, have given
 weight to the obvious suggestion that his ideas developed as his
 knowledge of the meaning of Christianity grew ^{deeper.} ~~wider.~~ The evidence
 of the coinage of his time ^{and} of his writings, confused by that of the
 forgeries issued in his name, is extraordinarily conflicting. It is
 a subject which one would fain leave out of account to deal only
 with the actual transactions of his ^{legislation,} ~~legislature,~~ but to do so would
 miss important parts of his policy, which certainly, especially ⁱⁿ ~~later,~~
~~the later part of his reign, played greatly upon the personal chord~~
~~had a large part for himself in it, and which was furthered there,~~
~~and sought to establish itself by semi-sacred assumptions on his~~
~~not so much by decrees, as by investing his person with semi-sacred~~
~~own part~~ ^{accordance} ~~associations,~~ in ~~accord~~ with ~~the~~ traditional imperial policy. To
 understand this, we must know what he was in himself, as well as
 what he wished himself to be believed to be. Contemporary Christian
 historians for the most part accepted him just as he wished to appear,
 and thus their accounts are misleading as to fact, ^{although} ~~but~~ valuable indi-
 cations of his policy. Heathen rulers made on the whole a juster
 personal estimate, but again they were often blinded by prejudice on
 the Christian question, so that they underestimated the worth of some
 of his most valuable work. We have need here of the most careful
 appraisal of all the evidence, and must rely chiefly upon the
 documents, letters, edicts, etc., of the time rather than upon the
 opinions of even the most intimate of his associates. We have need
 also to remember that we deal with a man of genius, or at least of
 high ability, and ^{that} ~~coarse~~ methods of analysis will not discover his
 inner soul. It is a fact that religion and shrewd practicality
 often coalesce. We shall greatly err if where we can detect political
 advantage, we scoff at the possibility of sincerity of belief existing
 also. Ambition and broad-minded altruism are also not inconsistent,
^{unfortunately} ~~and fortunately,~~ for human nature, jealous crime and high ideals go
^{also sometimes} ~~often~~ hand in hand. When those things are considered we recognise

the futility of a priori reasoning in the historical sphere. In this account, therefore, we would seek to deal very strictly with the actual "monumenta" and documents of his transactions with the Church, where even contemporary comments are too often didactic and edificatory rather than strictly historical.

The first and greatest of these is the Edict of Milan. The text of this document is as follows:—⁽¹⁾

Already long since considering that liberty of worship should not be denied, but that authority should be given to the judgment and desire of each individual to perform divine duties according to his own individual choice, we ^{had given} ~~gave~~ ⁽²⁾ orders to Christians also to keep the faith of their own ^{persuasion} ~~choice~~ and particular mode of worship. But since many ^{different conditions} ~~various conditions~~ were plainly ^{added} in the aforesaid edict, in which ^{freedom} ~~such authority~~ was decreed to these same, that perhaps, as it happened, some of them, little by little, were ousted from this protection, wherefore I, Constantine Augustus, and I, Licinius Augustus came to Milan, and took under consideration all things that pertained to the public benefit and welfare. These things among others appeared specially and primarily advantageous and profitable to all. We resolved to ordain those matters by which reverence and piety to the deity might be exhibited, i.e., how we might give both the Christians and everyone else free choice to follow whatever religion he desired, in order that whatever divinity there is, or heavenly matter, ⁽³⁾ may be propitious to us and to all who live under our power. Therefore, this our will we have declared, with healing and thoroughly rectifying intention, in order that, the most complete authority may be denied to none of following and choosing the observance or worship of the Christians, and that authority be given every person to devote his mind to that worship which he thinks adapted to himself, (ΤΟΥ ΔΙΔΩΝΑΙ ΕΑΥΤΟΥ ΤΗΝ ΔΙΑΤΑΞΗΝ ΕΝ ΕΚΕΙΝΗ ΤΗ ΘΡΗΣΚΕΙΑ, ἣν αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἀποφθεῖν νομίσει)

(1) Eusebius. Ch. Hist. X. 5. Lactant. De morte Persecut. XLVIII.

(2) Refers to the Edict of Nicomedia ^{modifications in last mandate.}

(3) ~~ἄπλοοις~~ = here "conditions" not "sects". See pg. 4 of this Chapter note A.

(4) ~~As to last "whatever divinity is on the celestial throne."~~

~~previous decree, and as we could scarcely expect these "sects" to be Christian, ἄπλοοις probably refers here to heathen sects. The meaning of the present is thus that in a multitude of permitted sects perhaps Christianity had not fail respect the one who therefore deserved an edict concerned chiefly with it.~~

(4) Acc. to Lactantius "whatever divinity is the celestial throne."

in order that the Deity (τὸ Θεῖον) may be able to provide to us in all things the accustomed goodwill and kindness. It was natural that we should write that it was our pleasure, that since there have been completely removed the conditions concerning the Christians, which were contained in our former letters sent to Your Fidelity, it has been resolved also that whatever was wholly harsh and foreign to our clemency should be annulled, and that, freely and simply, each one of them, who has made that choice of observing the Christian religion, should keep to the same without any molestation. These things we resolved to communicate fully to Your Carefulness in order that you may know that we have given free and unrestricted authority to observe their own worship to these Christians, and when you see this to be granted to them by us, Your Faithfulness will understand that to others also, has been granted free and open authority, who wish to pursue their own observance and worship, and this has been done for the sake of the quiet of our times⁽³⁾ so that, in worshipping what each may prefer, he may have free liberty. This has been done by us in order that there might not appear to be any diminishing⁽⁴⁾ to anyone in respect of any rank or any religion.

This further we decree with regard to the Christians that, the places in which they were formerly accustomed to assemble, concerning which we formerly wrote to Your Fidelity in a different sense, - if any persons have purchased these, either from our treasury or from any other one, they shall restore them to the Christians without money and without demanding any price, putting aside all delay and hesitancy. Whoever also have ~~ordained~~ ^{obtained} them in a gift, shall return the same as soon as possible to the same Christians,⁽⁵⁾ also either those who have bought and those who obtained in a gift, if they think right, from our benevolence may demand something in return, that provision be made for them also according to

(1) Euseb. alone has these words.

(2) Following reading of Lactantius.

(3) *pro quiete temporis*, Lact. ἀκοιούσας τῇ ἡσυχίᾳ. Euseb. *pro* = in order to secure (peace)

(4) i.e. of liberty.

(5) Lact. has this text.

A. ἀφείξις is used in a peculiar sense by Eusebius in this decree - Lactantius' text is quite determinative as to the meaning conditions - "amotis omnibus omnia conditionibus"

our clemency. All which must be delivered up to the body of Christians by your care without delay, and since the same Christians are known not only to have had these places, at which they were accustomed to meet, but other places belonging not to individuals among them but to the right of their body, i.e., of the Christians, you will also command all these, by virtue of the law beforementioned, without any hesitancy, to be restored to the same Christians, i.e., to their body, and each of their synods, the aforesaid intention being clearly kept that all who, as aforesaid, have restored without price may expect their reward from our benevolence. And in all this you ought to render to the aforesaid body of Christians the utmost zeal in order that our order may be fulfilled as soon as possible, and in order that in this, through our goodness, provision may be made for the peace of the commonwealth and people. (τῆς κοινῆς καὶ δημοσίας ἡσυχίας). For by this intention, as aforesaid, the divine zeal for us which we have already experienced in many affairs, will continue firmly through all time. But in order that the aim of this, our ordinance, and of our kindness may be extended to the knowledge of all, it is natural that these things, before set forth in your orders ⁽¹⁾ you should publish and bring to the knowledge of all, in order that the legislation of this our kindness may remain unknown to no one."

Such then is the famous Edict of Milan which has been lauded to the skies as the first expression of the principle of religious liberty, and also condemned as a record of dishonest equivocation. We may judge too harshly or too well of it. It is manifestly deserving of all praise as the work of one desiring to be humane and moderate as a ruler. It is a declaration against tyranny and persecution. It is not the product of any settled principle of religious liberty. One cannot claim that its author had discovered

(1) Text obscure both in Greek and Latin.

the idea of complete toleration of all creeds and faiths. The events to follow do not bear out such a hypothesis. Nevertheless, progress had been made in the direction of mercy and ~~of humane~~ ^{of humane} principles of ~~civilised~~ government. Cruel persecution was ordered to cease, and the conditions, such as had disfigured the liberty of the Nicomedian Decree, were withdrawn; forfeited property was to be restored without delay to the Church, and no rank or kind of religion was to be excluded from this freedom. (1)

The assertion of Eusebius that heretics were excluded from this favour is contradicted by the text, ^{Since} ~~However speedily that might~~ ^{be to follow} the words "to Christians and everyone else" are sufficiently definite, as also is the phrase "to others also has been granted free and open authority." It is ^{obvious from its language that the} ~~doubtful if the Emperor at this~~ ^{Emperor both knew of the existence of sects and definitely included them in} ~~period knew of the existence of sects. Persecution then had ceased.~~ ^{the liberty just granted. Full and complete liberty was thus declared.} ~~Forfeited property was to be restored with compensation.~~ The Decree was thus a great step forward, ~~in the direction of mercy and humane~~ ^{principles of government and} whether it was consistently held to or not, it deserves all honour for ~~these~~ qualities of enlightened statesmanship. Not only so, but it may be noted that this liberty from persecution, offered to all faiths, was the consistent background of Constantian policy. There were modifications, the result of opportunism and of special aims, but this humanity represented a cardinal principle of government which had come to reign. Behind even tyrannical action in particular quarters, it remained obscured but operative. Its initiation must be laid to the credit of Constantine, for which act alone he is not altogether deserving of the title, "Great".

Another no less obvious but not less original feature of the decree is the theory that where all men, including Christians, are free to reverence their own religion, then the deity is most

(1)

fittingly honoured. Here Constantine soars beyond his time and enunciates what was not to be accepted for centuries. Conscientious religion securing heavenly favour had been, however, we are told a principle of Chlorus. He admired the Christians' faith in their own principles and did not approve of men who would change their beliefs to suit their circumstances. Constantine thus merely expressed an idea current in human minds. It may be noted that this was an early act of his government. It is much more a soldier's idea than an administrator's. It was destined quickly to disappear from effective legislation. Nevertheless he urged later that small bodies of men practising impiety did not endanger the commonwealth, but if left to freedom negatived their own evil effect. Julian too thought that the whole Christian body was merely fostered by antagonism. Such expressions of individualism and laissez - faire principles in respect of religion were, however, the effect rather of the desire to avoid cruelty. They were not convictions, but arguments used by those, who were actually believers in complete state-control, to excuse themselves from distasteful work. The practice of all the Constantians was to assume full responsibility for the religious acts of the community, yet fugitive as is the reference, we cannot but be struck by the "conscience clause" in the first State-charter of Christian liberty

It is, however, plain from the preamble that the Edict ^{was} ~~is~~ not concerned chiefly with general liberty but with securing full recognition of freedom to Christianity. ^{The} ~~Some~~ older decree had ^{granted a general toleration, but had hampered it with} ~~mentioned so many different permitted acts or various conditions.~~ ^{persuasions, that} ~~The~~ ^{was fully and warmly recognised by} the authors of this one desired to emphasise the fact that the Christian faith ~~is one of the~~ ^{the governing powers - as one of the means} ~~is marked as~~ ^{might} ~~be~~ by which the deity ~~may~~ be made propitious to ^{the Roman State.} ~~Roman power.~~ Free choice ^{was} ~~is~~ given not with the contempt of Nicomedia, or the kindly tolerance which might be accorded to some kinds of faith, but in order "that

whatever divinity there is or celestial power may be propitious to us and to all who live under our power." The Christian freedom of worship ~~was~~ ^{was} actually wedged in between two clauses which ~~expressed~~ ^{expressed} the ideas of the imperial "jus divinum" and the "pax deorum". If we wish interpretive commentary upon the meaning we can find it best in Constantine's own words ~~in a letter preserved~~ ^{in letters which speedily followed this enactment.} ~~one,~~ ^{one,} ~~by Eusebius.~~ From ~~it~~ ^{we} we gather that three thousand folles ⁽¹⁾ (eighteen thousand pounds) were sent to Caecilianus, Bishop of Carthage "for the use of certain ministers of the legitimate and most holy Catholic religion to defray their expenses" and the promise was made that, if this ~~was~~ ^{were} not sufficient, more would be given them by the treasurer. The letter which makes this grant, by the manner in which it refers to the Donatists, as if the Emperor had no clear idea as to who or what they were, reveals itself to be earlier than the time when the controversy connected with that sect rose to prominence. Thus we may conclude that shortly after the publication of the Edict of Milan, Constantine made gifts for the support of the Christian Church in Africa and almost certainly in other parts as well. Moreover he advised Caecilianus to take this question of the Donatists before the Proconsul and the Vicar of the Prefects, who indeed had been already instructed, it would appear, to give their attention to the matter. Another letter ⁽²⁾ gave orders that all the clergy should be exempted from political duties, i.e., from municipal offices and magistracies, which had become a great burden entailing heavy expenses. The effect of this was to bring the clergy into line with the heathen priesthood who had long enjoyed this immunity. The reason given was a desire to allow them to devote themselves to the service of the "Deity" without distraction, because, "when greatest reverence was thus paid, the greatest benefits would accrue to the State." In this letter also ~~it~~ ^{was} stated the Emperor's

(1)

Euseb.Ch.Hist.X,6. Such a letter would be sent to all Metropolitan bishops. The preservation of this one is due to its connection with the Donatist controversy.

(2)

Euseb.Ch.Hist.X,7.

conviction that, "when that religion was despised in which was preserved the chief reverence for the most holy celestial Power, great dangers were brought on public affairs, but that, when ⁽¹⁾ legally adopted and observed, (ἐνθέσμως ἀναληφθεῖσαν καὶ φυλαττομένην) it afforded the most signal prosperity to the Roman name; therefore it seemed good to him that those men who gave their services to this worship should receive recompense for their labours."

Does not this quotation throw a flood of light on the theory of the Church underlying these decrees? Christianity was the most sincere of religions. It preserved the chief reverence for the Deity. Reverence for the Deity benefitted the State. Experience proved the truth of this. Therefore a Christian clergyman was an officer of the State and deserved a reward from its treasuries. He kept the divine power propitious - he secured the favour of Heaven on behalf of the Roman Empire. In Constantine's eyes a cleric of the Church was thus a State-official, set apart for this particular political duty. At all events this was his idea when he came first to ally her to himself. The Church existed to serve the Celestial Power, to turn aside His anger, and to win His good will for the State. Whatever his personal views may have been, as an Emperor, he had no other interest in the Church ^{than this,} and we find ^{the same} ~~this~~ attitude repeatedly expressed in his letters.

The corollary of this theory would be that he as head of the State was Pontifex Maximus of the new faith. He might not interfere with her internal affairs when all were in good order. No more would he interfere with a proconsul in a province who was rendering satisfactory service; but he would not doubt ^{of} his right to take an active and leading part in the quelling of disorders. His idea of the kind of liberty, which he granted her,

(1) ^{further amplified} "Legally adopted" may be ~~explained~~ by the statement in Sozomen, that he enacted by law that a portion of the taxes of every city should be paid to the clergy. (Sozomen V, c.5.).

would be liberty to serve the State, ~~and that~~ ^{She} was paid to serve the State. Her clergy were granted privileges, he would argue, to enable them to serve the State. She existed for the sake of the political salvation of the Empire. That, at all events, was her earth-directed task. He might not be blind to her heavenly and spiritual purposes, but on the theory he expressed in these letters, there would be little likelihood of his recognition of her ^{independent} ~~definite~~ self-government.

It is also to be noted as significant for the determination of Constantine's Ecclesiastical policy that until the period of his breach with Licinius, i.e. until the date 321 A.D., he showed no diminution of favour to the ancient faith of Rome. Church historians throw his Christian benevolence into the foreground, but we have no evidence of any break with the traditions of the past in his acts of legislation. There is indeed a severe law of date 315 A.D. which forbids molestation of a convert from the sects of Jews, "Caelicoli" and Samaritans, and more savagely ordains punishment for any persons going over to these beliefs.⁽¹⁾ There are also decrees⁽²⁾ against "haruspices", a class of men against whom Constantine seems to have waged constant war throughout this period. Severe as is the punishment for such and all private persons employing them, it is plain that none but the unauthorised augur or quack magician are under displeasure. They are men "whose friendship is to be repelled", and who are suspected of causing an unhealthy moral and physical condition in all who have dealings with them. Express limitation is made of the operation of this act, ^{however,} ~~in~~ in favour of all who seek to cure disease or to bring favourable weather. Moreover it is expressly pointed out that the public altars are open to all and there is no prohibition of the offices of past usage.

(1.) Codex Theodos. ~~VI~~ Tit. V l. 8.

(2.) Ibid IX Tit 16. l. 1, 2. + 3.

"Adite aras publicas at-que delubra, et consuetudinis vestrae celebrate solemnia; nec enim prohibemus praeteritae usurpationis officia libera luce tractari."⁽¹⁾

It is to be noted also that the coinage of the Empire continued to do reverence to the traditional gods. The authors, Burckhardt and Schiller⁽²⁾, have given considerable attention to this evidence. From their writings the facts ^{are made apparent although they} ~~from which they~~, however, draw ^{differing} ~~different~~ conclusions ^{from them.} ~~appear~~. In Gaul, Constantine had struck three god-coins, to Mars, to the Genius Populi Romani, and to the Sun god. The first two disappear after his war with Maxentius ^{but the last continues as the popular coin of his reign.} Licinius struck coins for Constantine with Jupiter and Genius Augusti honoured upon them, but Constantine did not use these emblems in coins struck on behalf of the Eastern ruler. It may be noted that the Labarum ^{*} ~~is~~ credited with a Christian emblematic meaning, has a rare appearance in the coinage of Constantine's reign. There are some ^{appearances, however} ~~and~~ and these are not, as has been said ^{entirely on} ~~coins~~, which his son consecrated after his death in his father's honour. They are ^{nevertheless} ~~however~~ few and late. Coins with a cross on the reverse side are more frequent, but in Schiller's estimation only indicate that a Christian mint-master was allowed to use emblems which pleased his individual taste. There are a frequency of representations of the Emperor ~~himself~~ with the Labarum upon his helmet, and these are god-coins, the most common reverse inscription being "Soli invicto comiti". Variations of the Labarum are emblems of the form ^{*} which is doubtless a sun-wheel. If we therefore can draw any information from this field of evidence at all, it is that Constantine freely permitted, or perhaps commanded, that his coins should be decorated with pagan devices. The evidence of Christian emblems is indeed the more difficult to secure and depends upon

(1) Cod. Theod. ~~II~~ Tit. 16 l. 2.

(2.) Burckhardt. Die Zeit Constantins. p. 347 ff. Schiller.

Geschichte Röm. Kaiserzeit. p. 247 ff.
207 ff.

our conception of the meaning of the Labarum, a subject which we shall discuss later. One determinative piece of evidence, if it could be established, would be ^{the fact} that a certain coin depicts him as Pontifex Maximus with veiled head, which is vouched ^{for} by Miomet (De la rareté et du ~~prix~~ des médailles romaines Paris 1827). Nevertheless we know otherwise that he kept this office and have no reason to suppose that, up to the date of his breach with Licinius, he ever gave indication of regarding with disfavour the ancient Roman faith. He was freely addressed by his pagan panegyrists in language redolent with references to the old cults. If at this period he purged certain temples which were centres of immoral rites, this would only be proof that he acted in the best interests of the faith, and Christian historians themselves are vouchers for gifts of more chaste statues, and sometimes of his own image, to heathen temples, in which he found immodest emblems.⁽¹⁾ All this might be the action of an enlightened Pontifex Maximus. All heathen historians ^{farther} praise the first period of his government, and Christians relate tales of his benevolence to the poor of all faiths.

Had he any theory as to the possibility of effecting a union between the two religions of his Empire? Viewing Christianity as he did, as a possible part of the general state-system of divine propitiation, we see no reason to think this ~~otherwise than most probable~~ ^{improbable}. His general legislation was in the direction of bringing the Christian clerics into equality with the heathen priests. He framed a general prayer to be used by the soldiers of his armies, in these words:-

"We acknowledge Thee, the only God; we own Thee as our king and implore Thine aid. By Thy favour have we gotten the victory; through Thee we are mightier than our enemies.

1. These actions may have only taken place in the period of Constantine's sole rule.

We render thanks for Thy past benefits and trust Thee for future blessings. Together we pray to Thee and beseech Thee long to preserve to us, safe and triumphant, our Emperor Constantine and his pious sons."

Probably in the year 321, he gave decree for the general observance of the first day of the week as a day of rest and religious meditation throughout the Empire. He did not style it the "Lord's Day" or give it any distinctively Christian name, but following his habit ~~at this period~~^{of} strict ~~neutrality~~^{thus-even to the very end of this period,} allowed it to go under the title of Dies Solis or Sunday. He designed it no doubt both to serve as a public holiday and to allow the Christian population freedom to attend religious services.

The choice of the Christian first day, instead of the Roman day of Juppiter, for this purpose probably indicated the direction in which he found the greatest mobility, rather than a personal preference. If he granted to Christian virgins special privileges, he gave no more than had always been allowed to the Flamines and Vestals, and the lowering of the age of legal majority cannot be proved to be entirely designed for the advantage of Christian celibates. The Clergy were granted no more than the priestly function of manumitting slaves, ⁽¹⁾ ~~and~~

The permission given to bishops to judge law-suits ^{has only} ~~was in~~ doubtful confirmation⁽²⁾ and may mean no more, at this stage, than that the accordance with the common practice in Roman law of allowing clerics could act as umpires where such were allowed in ordinary law. ~~parties to choose an agreed on umpire.~~ The clerics had the same immunity from office ^{as} all the priesthood, and ^{although} large grants were made to them from the imperial treasury ^{but this} was no innovation so far as the public support ^{of} religion in general was concerned. The statement of Sozomen ⁽²⁾ that he enacted by law that a portion of the taxes of every city should be given to the clergy is not proved

See Magné's Collect³ of Decrees etc. p. 181, 211, 223, These acts were also very late in this early period. and at the time when an approach to a bolder favouring of Christianity was being made. (2) Sozomen I. 9. (3) loc cit.



by extant documents, ^{But is very possibly correct. It, however,} ~~and even so~~ may refer to some portion of public funds always applied to religious purposes. That the Hercules and Mithras cults were undisturbed at Rome from 313 to 321 inscriptions ~~are~~ ⁽¹⁾ quoted by Schiller ^{Show} (CIL - 6, 315, 507, and 508). The emperor cult can be found even after this date having his patronage (Aurel. Viet. 40, 28). Acts of the Codex Theod. XII. Tit. 5 lex 2, and XV, Tit. 1 lex 3, ^{prove} ~~show~~ that the immunity of heathen colleges was established (quod ut perpetua observatione firmetur) and that Temples were kept by him in due repair.

We thus find that two faiths were duly adopted and honoured with a view to securing divine favour for the Roman State. It cannot fail to be a matter of psychological interest to discover what was the mind of the person who represented such a policy. Writers have differed widely in their estimation. Burckhardt compares Constantine issuing the Declaration of Milan ~~to~~ ^{to} the First Consul signing the Concordat. Boissier describes him as ^{un devot} ~~and not~~ ^A "qui croit accomplir un acte pieux et se concilier tous les dieux en tolerant tous les cultes." Duruy credits him with ^A ~~"theism"~~ ^{A Theism} "honest and calm" while he sought to reunite his people in one belief of which the forms could change but of which the foundation would be the worship of one God." Beugnot ^{to} ~~credits~~ ^{own} him, as his Christian contemporaries generally did, ~~with an~~ ^{an} honest and thorough Christian faith and a policy which was "a perpetual accommodation between his beliefs and the duties of his office." It is almost impossible to detect the personal motives of a ruler, especially in a difficult situation. One with any claim to governing ability represents in his public acts not merely his personal opinion, but the general point of view of society of his day.. This is as true of autocrats as of

Difficulty arises here however as to whether this story was true and sincere, or merely part of ~~this~~^{his} later policy, whereby he sought to invest himself with an atmosphere of religious mystery.

This point requires some degree of special sifting.

The point is clear that throughout his reign the Labarum was an honoured sign. Traditions which cannot be traced ⁱⁿ ~~to~~ the early part of his reign, but which would appear to be established in the ^{part} later and after its death, connect it with the Christian faith.

It ought to be noted that the form of the emblem itself  ~~is~~ indecisive. It may be the initial letter of the name of Christ, or it may represent a coronated sun. The symbol ~~it is to be noted~~ is found on coins of the Ptolemies, and of the reign of Decius Trajanus (259 A.D.).⁽¹⁾ Many have supposed ^{Milman} ~~(Mansel,~~ Stanley, etc.)^{reported} from the form of the ^{vision} that what was seen was a Parhelion, and as the Labarum appears frequently in contact with the inscription "Soli invicto comiti", and varies with the sunwheel of Babylonian symbolism ,⁽²⁾ a Christian interpretation cannot be set down as the only possibility. The inscription over which it was set at Rome as the "salutary sign" and "proof of valour" do not identify it with the Cross of our Saviour, but are titles which might be attached to any battle-standard. Moreover the narrative in which Eusebius relates the

(1) See Article Numismatic Society Madden 1866. (2.) See e.g. Gressmann. Texte und Bilder, II p. 54. for a sun-wheel 4 spoked with flame-bands beside symbols of the Moon and Venus-Star (Ishtar). Tablets of Nabu-pal-iddina 870 B.C.

manner in which it was first chosen by the Emperor as his symbol seems to be a conjunction of two stories, of which it may be conjectured one was older, another later.⁽¹⁾

His words are:- "While he (Constantine) was thus praying there appeared to him a most marvellous sign from heaven, the account of which it might have been hard to believe had it been related by any other person. But since the victorious emperor himself long afterwards declared it to the writer of this history, when he was honoured with his acquaintance and his society, and confirmed his statement by an oath, who could hesitate to accredit the relation especially since the testimony of after-time has established its truth? He said that about noon, when the day was already beginning to decline, he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens above the sun, and bearing the inscription, "By this Conquer". At this sight he himself was struck with amazement and his whole army also, which followed him on this expedition and witnessed the miracle. He said, moreover, that he doubted within himself what the import of this apparition could be. And while he continued to ponder and reason on its meaning, night came on; then in his sleep the Christ of God appeared to him with the same sign which he had seen in the heavens and commanded him to make a likeness of that sign which he had seen in the heavens and to use it as a safeguard in all engagements with his enemies."

The earlier account of Lactantius⁽³⁾ simply tells us that the Labarum was a symbol of the name of Christ which the Emperor was divinely instructed to place upon his soldiers' shields and

helmets. Sozomen⁽²⁾ ~~although he knew Eusebius' story~~ ^{but has} ~~added to it so extensively that his evidence is of little worth.~~

~~places the event in a dream, in which we may suppose he followed~~
⁽⁴⁾ ~~Socrates is equally dependent upon Eusebius.~~
~~traditions he found elsewhere.~~ Thus the fact of any significant

(1) Euseb. Vit. Const. I. 28, 29. (2) Hist. I. 3. (3) Mort Persecut. § 44.

(1) To our mind a story of a vision of the Labarum with the motto seen at high noon in full view of all the soldiers is blended with one of a phenomenon in the evening sky and of the appearance of a messenger thereafter in a dream to the Emperor.

(4) Hist. I. 2.

public portent^t would seem to depend entirely upon Constantine's word. That Panegyrist should speak of heavenly armies seen in Gaul hastening to his assistance,⁽¹⁾ or Zosimus speak of strange flocks of owls at Rome, in view of the common ideas of the time, ~~and witness many a chapter of Livy~~ prove nothing except that the Romans took remembrance of ~~invigorated~~ prodigies after every great public event. ~~Thus~~ ^{Silence} on this particular miracle, which the Emperor alleged ^{that} all his armies had seen, is the more significant, and almost proof of the incorrectness of that part of the story. It occurs too in curious company with other astonishing tales connected with the same Labarum ^{and} emanating from the same source.

The actual events may have fallen out thus:- A Roman general, known to be in his policy humane and sympathetic towards Christians, in a crisis of his career chose a new emblem for his soldiers' arms. It had a form which was more or less strange to all, or at least to most. By Christians it was supposed to be a cross, with the initial letters of the Saviour's name. They concluded therefore that in some mysterious way the symbol had been chosen for their leader. Divine inspiration was suggested, as he was not a Christian and could not therefore be supposed to know the meaning of the standard he had adopted. The rumour spread, confirmed by his subsequent acts of liberation and of friendly support to the Faith, until it impressed the leader himself not a little, and, perhaps, working on the superstitious side of his nature, led him to incline more and more to a policy which wisdom and practical statesmanship also suggested. Finally when he became a whole-hearted supporter of the new religion he read back into ^{some} former experience the intervention of Christ. ~~what that former experience may have been, we can only guess.~~

(Para) All this is of course mere conjecture, and what that former experience

- (1.) The portents of Panegyrist which are significantly silent upon this one are to be found Nazarius c. 14, Panegy. IX. 2, X. 14, X. 16.

may have been can only be guessed at in a similar way. That auguries were unfavourable we know, for a panegyrist reveals this to us. Constantine was not a man incapable of superstitious awe. Late in his reign he ordered consultation of auspices when his palace was struck by lightning. The magic powers of Maxentius may therefore have been feared by him in the very manner which is the atmosphere of Eusebius' story. Nevertheless it is fact that he went into battle with a secret faith derived in some degree from this new symbol which he had attached to his soldiers' helmets. This he honoured when he reached Rome and victory. The Arch of Constantine contains an inscription which attributes his victory to divine help. "Instinctu Divinitatis" is the phrase used and even the inexpert person can see in a photograph that it is an alteration of other words. The arch is a mixture of architectural styles whence it has been concluded to be the adaptation of a Arch of Trajan to Constantine's honour. It is said that he erased a reference to Jupiter to put in this vaguer terminology. Such evidence and the fact that, ~~he described in the Edict of Christianity~~ ^{in early letters after his victory,} ~~he spoke of Christianity~~ ^{probable that he was a} as the highest form of piety, render the idea of his sincere respect ~~monothéist, and already appreciated the value of Christianity from this point of view. He may~~ ^{for Christianity at this early period very probable. Even a mystic's} ~~visions have often a shrewd practicality. We have to add the fact~~ ^{have had a vision of some mystical description despite the fact} ~~that, so much worldliness did exist~~ ^{contested with religious interest} in this man's mind that, when the time ^{came} to tell the tale freely ~~came~~, it had eclipsed whatever earlier ingenuousness there ^{might} ~~might~~ have been. ^{It is possible that} ~~Nevertheless the~~ ^{one} who saw the value of making himself a visionary may have done so because once he had a vision. That he gave himself in later years a false appearance of religiosity, does not exclude the possibility that he had once a strong religious bent. That in the spiritual crisis of battle, war of ambition though it was, he had some private vision which strengthened his faith in victory is extremely likely, and all but made certain by the facts. His family's traditional reverence for the sun-god, his own service to that deity in his coins, the ambiguous nature

of the Labarum and his connection of that symbol with the sun in his story, strongly incline one to believe, however, that his vision was then connected in his mind with "his Apollo" not with the Christian deity. It is, of course, possible that the very symbols of ^{his personal} ~~that~~ faith ^{-in the Sun-god might} ~~which was probably his true religion~~ might take their form in some subconscious way, from the idea of a Christian alliance, then becoming a dominant conception of his mind. There is little evidence, ^{however,} of real Christianity in any of his writings, as Schiller points out, ^{and} ~~but~~ at the early period, prior to the war with Licinius, there is no proof that he was not a monotheist of the type of Chlorus, honouring one God ^{under} the ^{symbol} ~~the~~ of the Sun, and seeing in Polytheism and Christianity two methods of propitiating and keeping favourable that Deity. From this position, ^{being much} in association with Christians, he moved forward, ^{we know,} to a clearer choice of Christianity as the one way of reverencing God, ending finally in adopting altogether that faith, ~~but~~ ^{however} Any deeper appreciation of the Christian position at the earlier stages of his government ^{-is} ~~would be~~ a precarious conjecture. His policy of strict neutrality as between the two great bodies, the adherents of the Roman cultus and of the Christian faith, need not therefore be a psychological puzzle. If our conjectures are correct his personal position was a neutral one as between these two religions, and he may have believed it possible, by simultaneous endowment and the regulation of identical prayers and feast-days, to unite both in some practical unity. At all events, whether our guesses at his private faith be correct or no, his attitude, as a ruler over the two different communities of believers, was to attempt such a working coalition of their respective sanctions and influences, ~~and~~ as might enable him, availing himself of both, to establish his government firmly over his dominions.

(1) "The Apollo" phrase of Paganism.

39
 have noted,
 We ~~note~~ however, that private auguries were an
 abomination to him. So when he came to know ^{more closely of the} ~~of the existence~~
~~of~~ Christian sectaries, he found them equally distasteful. He
 did not wish any small independent groups of worshippers to
 continue in separation from the general body of the Church.
 His first experience of this difficulty came through events
 connected with the Donatist controversy.

The Donatists were followers of Bp. Majorinus, and
 afterwards ^{of Bp.} Donatus, who separated from the Church in 311,
 refusing to recognise the Traditors, i.e., those who had given
 up sacred books to the magistrates during the periods of
 persecution. At this stage they would not acknowledge the
 authority of Caecilianus and other officials of the Church at
 Carthage. ^{The former,} ~~when~~ they accused, of having been ordained by a Traditor,
 namely Felix of Aptunga. They had also strong views upon the
 laxity and grossness of morals in the Church, and desired to
 take measures to allow only the most blameless to be retained
 within her fold. They were not at first opposed to the idea
 of State-support for the Church. In fact it may be supposed
 that their exclusion from the gifts, sent to Caecilianus for the
 Carthaginian Clergy, was what caused them first to appeal to the
 Emperor for an examination of their case. ⁽¹⁾ At least we find
 Anulinus, the pro-consul of Africa, in the same letter, ⁽²⁾ in
 which he reported the receipt and inclusion in his Records of
 Constantine's letter to Caecilianus, transmitting to Rome a
 sealed packet, containing the Donatists' charges against
 Caecilianus, which they had besought him to forward to the
 Emperor. ⁽³⁾ As Augustine points out, it was an act of disloyalty
 on their part to appeal to the civil authorities, and Constantine
~~was evidently advised that this was so, because he wisely refrained~~

(1) For this theory see McGiffert, Eusebius, Nicene and Post
 Nicene Fathers, p.383, n.12.

(2) Augustine, Letter 88.

(3) Do. letter 93, p.13.

wisely refrained

from judging the matter himself but called together a Synod of bishops at Rome to try the case. ^{His letter⁽¹⁾ calling together this} ~~no selected Gallic bishops~~ ^{Council survives, ~~in spite of a tendency in it to judge already adversely to~~} for this purpose since they were entirely free from the charges ~~the Donatists it is probably genuine. We note that Gallic bishops are~~ (1) which the Donatists were levelling against Caecilianus, and chosen as judges, probably because they were free from the charges ~~inferred against~~ he naturally asked the ~~bis. of Rome in whose diocese they met~~ ^{Caecilianus. It was natural also that the Bishop of Rome in whose diocese they met should} to preside (A.D. 313). Though he was not present at the

examination of the case, ^{Constantine} ~~he~~ caused the records of all that was done to be brought to him and studied them carefully. ^{Optatus is} ~~the~~ ^{one authority that the} verdict of the Synod was against the Donatists, although it

allowed them to retain their episcopal thrones on condition of returning to the unity of the Church; ^{and that the} ~~the~~ decision was announced to the Emperor and both parties returned to Carthage.

~~Gaecilian and Donatus, it had been designed, should wait until the decision had been promulgated, but, as the Donatists prevented the Synod's emissaries from doing this, and Donatus returned, Gaecilian followed him to Carthage. However~~ Peace was ^{far-off}.

Complaints with regard to Caecilianus were again made to the Emperor, who referred them to the decision of Rome, but on their complaining that they were not heard there, ⁽³⁾ called an enquiry to discover if Felix of Aptunga had really delivered up the Scriptures. The evidence of the Roman officer charged to collect the sacred books proved his innocence, but the dispute not dying down, Constantine called a Synod at Arles to settle the matter. His summoning letter to one bishop is characteristic, we suppose, of all, ⁽⁴⁾ "Since some forgetful of their own salvation and the reverence due to our most holy religion even now do not cease to protract their enmity since therefore we have commanded many bishops to meet together, I have also thought proper to write to thee that taking a public vehicle etc. . . . and bring with thee two others of the Second Order (of clerics)

- (1) See Constantine's letter to Aelafius, Migne 483-6.
- (2) See Optatus De Schism Donat, for history of these events.
- (3) See Optatus.

- (4) Euseb. Ch. Hist. X, 5. to Christian Bp of Syracuse Migne p. 485-ff. ~~Optatus version has same facts as letter above in letter to Aelafius. That letter is the open probably an over-written copy of an original.~~

I would have you meet with them, that by the might of your authority this dispute may be reduced to that faith, and observance of religion, and fraternal concord, which ought to prevail." Caecilian with his friends and representatives of the Donatists were invited to be present, and a State-permit to travel was given to them. Bishops attending were instructed by the Emperor to make arrangements that order might be maintained in their absence, and were even advised as to the route by which they ought to proceed. The number of attendant presbyters and servants was fixed by Imperial order. In all this Constantine might have, like any wise ruler, the advice of such clerics as Hosius or Sylvester of Rome, but he evidently proceeded on the ~~line~~^{theory} that the orderliness of the Church, like that of the Empire, was his sphere of surveillance.

Some thirty-three bishops attended the Council of Arles (A.D. 314). ^{Since} Marinus of Arles presided, ^{that} one would guess it was customary then for the local bishop to take this office. Their decision was exactly on the lines of that previously arrived at by the Roman Synod. It dealt generously with the recalcitrant party, providing ⁽¹⁾ that every Donatist bishop, who returned back to Church unity, should exercise judicial powers alternately with the Catholic bishop, until the survivor became sole bishop. They then proceeded to draw up twenty-two canons relating to Church affairs. The Donatists were still dissatisfied. The Catholic bishops, their other business over, asked leave to go home. The Emperor in a most eloquent letter ⁽²⁾ exhorted them to further patient dealing with the heretics, when, if they saw that nothing could move them from their obstinacy, they would be free to return to their own sees. The Donatists then apparently "appealed to Caesar." ⁽³⁾ Extraordinary as it may seem the very

(1)

So we judge by letter of African bishops, claiming that this was the decision, although this letter^{is} of a much later date, Aug. Epp. 128. It is a probable decision since Nicæa was equally generous to the Meletians.

(2) Epist. of Const. to Bishops. Migne 487-90 (from Optatus).

(3) Athanasius, as we shall see, similarly appealed to Constantine from the decisions of Tyre. It is interesting to see how out of his case the Church developed a definite policy as to such appeals.

party, which sought purity and unworldliness in Church-affairs, directly asked for the re-examination of their case, which a Synod had dealt with, by one not a catechumen of the Church. They were a minority, a minority in Carthage, and represented a view not popular in wider circles. Their protest was against laxity. Generous treatment of their schism, even restoration to their old bishoprics, could hardly satisfy men who must have withdrawn because their conscience excommunicated some of the African Catholic clergy. They felt that they were the Church and the others undeserving of the name. Imperial interference was strange, but to desperate men might contain hopes of vindication.

According to a letter preserved by Optatus the Emperor rebuked their Erastianism! He, who had acted with such authority hitherto, and had called the Synod, as an Emperor might summon his local magistrates to counsel, is alleged to have written, "What do these wicked men mean? servants of the devil! They seek out the secular, having abandoned the heavenly. O rash audacity of mania! As is wont to be done in the cause of the peoples, they have introduced an appeal. What do they think of Christ who, refusing the heavenly judgment, think mine ought to be asked?" This letter is certainly inauthentic. If it were to remain it would be ^{an almost unique} ~~the one~~ reference to our Saviour in all Constantine's writings of this period, and otherwise its genuineness is made ^{highly improbable} ~~impossible~~ by the fact that Constantine did undoubtedly hear the appeal. (2)

(1) St. Augustine asserts that he was "compelled" to hear the case but what could compel him? A Synod representative of all parts of his realm had already given judgment. The highest religious court possible had decided the case. Had he not

(1) Ep. 43, p. 20. (2) Its ostentatious opening is not according to the style of Constantine.

believed that there was a higher authority than the religious, he would have contented himself with the execution and enforcement of that court's sentence. Nevertheless he retried the case, not on any technical point, but on its merits.

According to the supposed letter of Constantine to the bishops
~~In his letter to the bishops after Arles, Constantine~~
~~after Arles he gave~~
~~wrote that he had given orders that all these "infamous~~
~~deceivers" should be directed towards his court, where they~~
~~would stay and experience various severities. This apparently~~
~~was his avowed intention as far as summoning the Donatists to~~
~~proof of its inauthenticity for it is certain that~~ (1)
~~his edict was concerned, but~~ when they were there he sent letters
 to Caecilianus asking him to appear before him and them at Rome
 to stand a third trial. Caecilianus did not obey the summons
 and certain of the Donatists, when the Emperor ordered delay and
 a new trial at Milan, seem to have thought that the African
 bishop had not really been summoned, but that a device had been
 employed to get possession of their persons. (2) They accordingly
 fled to Africa. No authority seems able to give any reason why
 Caecilian did not appear, but we may guess that he felt this new
 move on Constantine's part to be out of accord with the spirit
 of ecclesiastical ~~autonomy~~ ^{autonomy} and feared it might betoken evil to
 himself. This conjecture of ours is rendered somewhat probable
 by the contents of the Emperor's letter (3) to Celsus, written
 immediately after the departure of some of the Donatists to
 Africa, and referring to his arrangements for the forthcoming
 judgment, which he was to pronounce. He, here, requests Celsus
 to make known to Caecilianus his pious reverence for the
 religious affairs of Africa and; though he wishes in the meantime
 that the Donatists should be allowed freedom from interference,
 he plainly desires that his intention, "to destroy and scatter"
 all perverters of religion, should be conveyed to the ears of the

(1) *See letter to Celsus. Migne 489 ff.*
~~Loc cit. This conjecture is rendered somewhat probable by the contents of the Emperor's letter to Celsus, written immediately after the departure of some of the Donatists to Africa, and referring to his arrangements for the forthcoming judgment, which he was to pronounce.~~

(2) This is a more probable conjecture as to their motives than that of Augustine, viz. that they expected Caecil. to be condemned in absentia.

(3) Migne 489-92.

bishop. He would also like him to know that he is going to make inquiry not only for the sake of the people but also "on behalf of those clerics who are chiefs" and that he is "going to judge that which is plainly most true and most religious." Was all this information as to his intentions not an attempt to induce one who had been well tried already, in more senses than one, to submit himself to another examination? If it were, it succeeded in its object. The cause was reheard at Milan, Caecilianus being present and the Emperor was able to announce his decision ⁽¹⁾ that Caecilianus was a "man endued with all innocence, observing the duties of his religion, and serving it as was fitting, nor could any accusation be found against him such as had been invented by the deception of his adversaries in his absence." If the African bishop's sole inducement to go to Milan was the Imperial promise of repressive measures against his opponents, his hopes were doomed to disappointment, for Constantine wrote to him and his colleagues, urging them to bear with patience the insolent attacks of the heretics and to leave vengeance to God whose right it was.

Such was Constantine's method of dealing with the Donatist question and the motive policy governing it throughout will be seen to be contained in this quotation from one of his letters, ⁽²⁾ "Nothing ought rather to be done by me in accordance with my constituted office of prince than that, errors being dispelled and indiscretions pruned away, I should accomplish the presentation to Omnipotent God of true religion, universal harmonious simplicity, and due worship." His object was to avoid all contentions and altercations, for he confessed that he feared such disorders would bring upon him the anger of the Supreme Divinity, who had entrusted all earthly things to his governorship. He felt most secure, he said, when all men were

(1) Epist. of Const. Migne, 491. ~~cf letter to Aclafius p. 483 ff~~

(2) To Celsus Migne, 489-92. ^{to Celsus.}
cf also letter to Aclafius. Migne pp. 483 ff.

venerating God with proper worship. We are reminded of the precept of Maecanas as quoted by Dio Cassius, "Always reverence divinity thyself and compel others to pay similar honour, but those who adopt strange practices in this respect hate and punish, not only for the sake of the Gods, but because such people as bring in new deities, corrupt many to adopt new laws, and out of this arise cabals, risings and conspiracies which accord very ill with rule by one person." Constantine was sure that his appointment to the Imperial throne was in a sense a divine appointment. No Roman Emperor ever thought less than that of his office. His position consequently was that it was his duty, if the ordinary Church-courts could not secure unity and peace, to step in and enforce it himself. There was nothing extraordinary in such an attitude. It would indeed have been astonishing if he had assumed any more humble position towards the Church. The people of the Roman Empire were accustomed to the domination of the Emperor in every department, and so at first he slipped easily into an ecclesiastical position similar to that which he occupied in the pagan cult. He plainly wished to command such a status. In regard to the Donatist controversy we have seen that he took matters confidently into his own hands, summoned a council on his own initiative, selected the representatives and commanded their presence with all courtesy but with the fullest authoritativeness. He was advised no doubt by men of rank in the Church, but it is absurd to suppose that the Bishop of Rome ⁽¹⁾ was associated with him in these acts. He ~~might say that the decision of the Priests was the decision of God, but he~~ ^{obviously} was fully convinced of his own ability "to judge what is plainly most true and most religious."⁽²⁾ He believed that his office of Prince gave him full authority to keep the

(1) So of course all Roman Catholic writers argue from their stand point.

(2) Epist. to Celsus Migne 489-92.

Church pure from errors and disorders, and had no fear, but
 that he could show by a plain judgment ⁽¹⁾ "what, and what sort of
 veneration for the supreme Deity ought to be kept, and what sort
 of worship best pleased him."

In his letter to the people of Africa his sense of
 responsibility ~~is~~ ^{was} equally evident. He apparently felt it to
 be his duty to maintain the peace of holy society in order that the
 grace put in the hearts of His servants by the Summus Deus should
 be kept stable and in all concord. He refused, however, to become
 a persecutor. So long as the force of wickedness was confined to
 few he trusted that God's mercy would mitigate its evil effects
 against the Populus. He indeed had some very enlightened words
 to add upon the subject of vengeance and oppression. He thought
 it would be obvious to all that while penitence might still bring
 hope of eternal life these people who erred were not to be cut off,
 and that a Church bred in the spirit of martyrdom could bear their
 insolence with patience.

Thus under a reign of peace the Church had come to receive
 favour and also to be threatened with domination. There was thus
 both opportunity and danger before her.

(1) Loc.cit.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF
STATE- RELATIONSHIP.



The Church, as we have seen, had grown up under a long tradition of almost complete separation from the State, so that she both in her own thoughts and in those of her enemies, constituted a "Third Race" in the midst of the Empire. There is no doubt but that her conceptions, occupied with the thought of a Divine Kingdom which was to be the gift of God, would give a ready consent to some of the pessimistic views of established society which found currency in philosophical thought. Like Stoicism her ethical ideas provided scope for the principles of cosmopolitanism and democracy, and the Roman system could not but in many places revolt against her moral sense. Nevertheless she had in her earliest writings the statement of a conservative view of the existing order, and in times of peace and in the appeals of apologists to imperial authorities, she had given utterance from time to time to a theory of the State as a part of the plans of Providence for the government of the world, and as a copartner with herself in furthering His purposes. The New Testament scriptures contained in fact material for two views of the Empire. The Apocalypse had spoken of Rome as Babylon destined for destruction because of the blood of the saints shed by her. Such quotations had most consideration from Churchmen in days of persecution, but in times of peace, especially when seeking to defend the faith to governors and emperors, writers remembered the conservatism of other portions of the New Testament bearing the names of St. Paul and St. Peter. These spoke of the Empire as set by God for the punishment of them that do ill, as a power having also its due of honour and allegiance; and had exhorted that prayers and intercessions should be offered, at the gatherings of Christians, for Kings and all in authority, in recognition of the fact that through them peace and quiet were secured as the foundations of all godly living. The Sub-Apostolic Church, ~~while~~ ^{adhered strongly} ~~adhering~~ to the view that the Kingdom of Christ was not of this world, ~~in the sense of having the~~ ^{since its} authority, represented by the power of "binding and loosing", ^{was} conferred upon it from a higher source, and also ~~of being in its ends~~ ^{because its ideals were} such as need never bring it

into conflict with the State, ^{It} ^{however,} did not regard the two entities as utterly and entirely separated out of all possible relation. Clement of Rome's Epistle to the Corinthians contains a prayer which fulfils the demands of the New Testament precepts. "Give concord and peace to us and to all that dwell on the earth, - - and grant that we may be obedient to thy almighty and glorious name and to our rulers and governors upon the earth. Thou, Master, hast given the power of sovereignty to them through thy excellent and inexpressible might, that we may know the glory and honour given to them by Thee and be subject to them in nothing resisting Thy will. And to them Lord grant health, peace, concord, and firmness that they may administer the government which Thou hast given them without offence".⁽¹⁾

At this age the ecclesiastical governing officials were altogether too humble to be spoken of in these terms and thus it is plainly on behalf of civil rulers that these prayers ^{were} ~~are~~ made and to whom ^{was} ~~is~~ credited a vice-regency from God.

Justin Martyr in an apology quoted the determinative answer of Jesus to the question regarding the payment of tribute upon which he commented "Therefore to God alone we render worship, but in other things we gladly serve you, acknowledging you as Kings and rulers of men, and praying that with your Kingly power you may be found to possess also sound judgment. But if you pay no attention to our prayers and frank explanations, we shall suffer no loss".⁽²⁾ Justin was quite definitely of the idea that the Christians were the new Israel with Christ as King, but nevertheless he could have a conception of the alliance of Rome and the Church. "We are your best helpers," he said, "in promoting peace".⁽³⁾ It is, however, doubtful if we can regard the statement of the Epistle to Diognetus which compares the Church and World to the soul and body as a positive recognition of the value of the world. We must

(1) Clement to the Corinthians I. lx. lxi (2) I Apol. xvii (3) Trypho. cxxxv.

Some aspects of early
 remember Christian pessimism with regard to the body and the fact
 that Augustine has similar parallels to make in the very hour
 when he is contemplating the passing of the Empire's power. ⁽¹⁾ ~~Non~~
~~again may we, as Harnack does, construe parallels drawn between~~
~~Empire and Church as always favourable to a positive political~~
~~standpoint since the intention may as often be contrast and~~
~~hostile opposition.~~ There is no dubiety, however, about the
 passage in Melito's apology to Marcus Aurelius, quoted by Eusebius. ⁽²⁾
 He wrote "The philosophy which we profess first indeed flourished
 among the barbarians, but afterwards, when it grew up, also among
 the nations under your government. Under the glorious reign of
 Augustus your ancestor, it became especially to your empire an
 auspicious blessing, for since that time the Roman power has grown
 in greatness and splendour; whose desired successor you have become
 and will be together with your son if you preserve that philosophy,
 which has been nurtured with the empire, which commenced its
 existence with Augustus, and which also your ancestors did honour,
 with other religions. One of the greatest evidences, that our
 doctrine flourished to the advantage of a reign so happily begun, is
 that there has nothing disastrous occurred to the empire since the
 reign of Augustus; on the contrary all things have proceeded
 splendidly and gloriously according to the wishes of all".

Athenagoras writing about the same period made the plea
 that the Christians deserved consideration since they prayed for
 the imperial government and that the emperors might receive the
 Kingdom, son from father, and extend their dominions until all men
 were subject to their sway. ⁽³⁾

If these writings are not accounted of full significance
 since they are addressed to Emperors and may distort the position,
 more weight should be attached to the statement of *Irenaeus*

(1) *Mission & Expansion of Christianity* Vol I p. 260 ff.
 (2) *H.E. IV. 26.* (3) *Athenag. Apol. XXXVII.*

in his commentaries on Scripture who declared that the devil lied in claiming the kingdoms of this world were his, for they are in God's disposal, and that man since the fall requires the rule of governors with the power of sword, which governors are under God's jurisdiction and must render to him an account. ⁽¹⁾ He explained the existence of bad rulers as a divine dispensation for the chastisement of the people. Tertullian again quoted Christian prayers on behalf of the long life of the Sovereign, his tranquil exercise of power, his security in his house, in his armies, and the fidelity of his people. This was no false loyalty, he urged, since all that threatened the Empire threatened also the Christians in it. ⁽²⁾ It was his view that final disaster was retarded by the respite (Commeatus) allowed to the Empire, even as St. Paul had said, and, believing it to be the last of the great governments of earth spoken of by the prophets, he thought that Christians would be found unanimously to favour the "Romana diuturnitas. ⁽³⁾"

Such a theory of the Empire and its purpose in the plans of God was repeated within the Constantian period by Lactantius, one of those Churchmen who had influence with Constantine and who in their turn were ^{perhaps} influenced by his conceptions. Lactantius had probably composed the greater part of his Divine Institutes before the policy of Constantine became operative. It was perhaps a second edition of his work which was dedicated to that emperor, to whose son Lactantius acted as tutor. We find in it criticism of the current philosophical ideas which were pessimistic of the existing social order. The author did not accept those doctrines which derived corporate life from some primitive association of man for mutual defence and support, but believed it to have its roots in the descent of mankind from common parents, and thus

(1) Iren. Haer. V. 24. 2. (2) Tertall Apol. 33. (3) loc. cit. 32.

~~(4) Renan. Marcus Aurelius p. 186~~ 7.

to be more directly due to God's ordering of the world than to human invention, the divine purpose being that thus men could put into practice the moral law of love and justice.⁽¹⁾ Moreover he could not imagine for his own age any possible foundation for corporate life, wherein any moral/or human conditions could be realised, but the Roman State. "Illa, illa, est civitas", he wrote, "quae adhuc sustentat omnia". The removal of Roman power would mean the commencement of an era, he thought of unutterable confusion. He believed such a time to be destined to descend upon the world, as a preliminary to the foundation of the Kingdom of Heaven. He gave a vivid picture of the catastrophe.⁽²⁾ "There will be no faith in men, no peace, no humanity, no shame, no truth and so no security, no government, no respite from evil. The whole earth will be in confusion, wars will arise everywhere, all races will be in arms, and fight among themselves, the most closely related states will war together.... the sword will rove through all the earth, reaping all things and strewing all things to the ground as its harvest, of which wasting and confusion this will be the cause, that, (the mind shudders to say it, but say it, I will for it will come to pass) the Roman name will be taken from the earth and the government shall revert to Asia, and once again the East shall rule and the West be enslaved". Thus he called for prayers and devout service of God that ~~His plans~~ ^{these events} might be delayed and there be no premature and unexpected arrival of this period of tyranny and disaster.

We shall be justified therefore in supposing that the Church did not think of herself as able to provide a substitute for Roman government if that should be taken away. For all her quasi-national consciousness, and her disgust ^{at} ~~for~~ the many immoralities of the imperial government, she had not developed yet the ideas which St. Augustine was to express later in the De Civitate.

(1) *See Institutes* VI. 11. (2) *loc. cit.* VII. 15.

She had not conceived of the establishment of a new state conformed to Christian principles. Her idea of the Empire was probably akin to the view of her ascetics regarding marriage. The new and ideal world would have no need for it, but meantime its value was that of something which prevented worse evils. God had planned it as a necessity for this present earthly life. In the realisation of the Kingdom of Heaven it would disappear, but ~~since~~, when it disappeared, ^{for} ~~and~~ so long as ordinary earthly conditions otherwise remained the same, ~~there was to be an interval of chaos, it was~~ *chaos would prevail. It was, then, in the interval,* desirable that it should continue. It was not final in an absolute sense but as a support of order under earthly conditions, it was relatively final and indispensable.

It was only natural therefore that, when the State became friendly, a theory limiting its power of interference with the Spiritual body should not at once develop. The Church had enjoyed absolute liberty heretofore, but not such as gave her any idea as to what belonged to the undoubted prerogatives of her nature and foundation, and what merely was due to custom and the isolation of contempt in which she had been left. It was for her to declare what were the principles of her autonomy, for it was obvious that the State would not do so, but was ready to slip into its usual place of power and complete authority in the new faith as in the old. We can see that at first interferences were allowed which would afterwards be condemned. ~~The hearing of the~~ *The appeal of the* Donatists, ~~appeal~~ from the ecclesiastical Synod to the civil magistrate would afterwards be declared illegitimate, even as the reluctance of Caecilianus to submit to the Caesar's court and the contempt of the Donatists for its decisions hinted now. There were other interferences with the internal affairs of the Church to which she submitted in this period. For example the immunity from public

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offices apparently drew many to the ecclesiastical ranks whom the Emperor did not wish to have excused from magisterial duties.

(1)
Thus we find in a later edict an incidental reference to a regulation which he had made that "no decurion or son of a decurion, or yet one provided with sufficient riches or fitted for undertaking public offices, should betake himself to the name and service of the Clerics". The letter which contained this reference mentioned the disquiet caused among such ~~with~~^{as} before the promulgation of this law had taken holy orders, and in view of this, commanded that all these ~~shall~~^{should} be left in peace, but that all, who had become clergymen since the law was made, should be taken from office and restored to the ranks of the Senate. A still later decree, (2) in view of the fact that it behoved opulent persons to undergo the hardships of the world and poor people to be maintained by the riches of the State, commanded that if a cleric died another should be elected in his place, whose family had never contained a magistrate and who was unable to discharge public functions; and further that any cleric fitted by patrimony to serve as a magistrate, was to be taken out of the ranks of the clergy and handed over to the State.

Thus we see how in this matter the control over the appointment of her officials, was interfered with by the State. (3)
As early as the time of Clement of Rome the election had been democratic and free, and now here was the hand of alien authority laid upon this hitherto unrestricted liberty. It might be in this instance to the Church's advantage, since it excluded from the clerical office men of worldly designs, but it represented, especially in view of the charismatic character attributed to these offices, an impossible position for the Church. Her priesthood moreover would not, like that of the Roman system, shake down

(1) Letter to Bassus Migne VIII.209 Codex.Theod.XVI.

(2) De Episcopis A.D.326.Migne p.314.

(3) See Clement to Corinth.I.XLIV.3. *κατασταθέντας . . . ἐφ' ἑτέρων ἐλογίζετο ἀνδρῶν, συνευδοκῆσθαι τῆς ἐκκλησίας πείρας.*

into the grooves of the social life of the Empire. Celibacy and asceticism kept them distinct from that life to a large extent, and consequently a distinction of rank of this sort, in limiting eligibility to Churchly office, would prove impossible to maintain. Men of high rank and wealth could not justly be excluded from her priesthood, and the Church herself could more effectively deal with the problem of the worldlings, who betook themselves for material advantage to her places of authority. Her increased demands for self-denial in her clergy were in process of solving some of these difficulties. Constantine's law was devised really to suit a purely political necessity. Municipal and other offices entailed heavy expense, and if a large class were excluded, there would be loss of revenue and greater hardship for all not privileged. It was a matter in which the State must weigh the advantage reaped from the priesthood discharging its own proper function and that accruing from the discharge of these civil offices. The fact that Constantine in this early period ruled out of the ecclesiastical ranks the decurions, reveals that he deemed this matter not at all one of inalienable and sacred privilege, but a question coming well within the scope of his general administration. Churchmen, confused by the fact that their officials were similar in their spheres of office and in many ^{other} ways to the imperial magistrates, might have given away altogether upon this point. We shall see at a later stage that steps were taken to protect their independence in this respect, but we have here indicated one of the dangers which threatened the Church and which were not at first recognised in their true light.

From the beginning, however, the Church came to the Empire with an organisation so perfect that ^{to ignore} ~~a total ignoring of~~ her own self-governing powers was impossible. No ruler could

afford to despise such excellent methods of control as she had established. The Synods were thus convoked by Constantine at once, and in them, he might consider there lay to hand, a most useful method of impressing central control upon the ecclesiastical body. Sozomen asserts, without affixing a definite date to the enactment, that it was ordained that litigants preferring ecclesiastical judges to those of the civil courts, should be satisfied in that respect and that judgments by clerics in these instances should be irreversible and command the power of the secular arm for their execution. We have no documentary evidence of such a law and the irreversible nature of such judgments must certainly be exaggeration. In the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, however, such a method of settling a law-suit had been urged as alone proper, so that episcopal verdicts would be naturally sought by Christians. Moreover, Roman law permitted settlement of a case by a chosen and agreed-on umpire, so that actually there was no great innovation here, ~~and it is doubtful if Sozomen can be accepted as authority for anything more than the continuance of what had become among Christians a custom.~~ A letter of Julian ^{indeed} reveals to us that some ~~legisla-~~ ~~ive~~ authority had been given at an earlier period than his reign to ~~such~~ ecclesiastical decisions. We cannot, however, trace such an enactment among the authentic acts of the period, ^{except that} ~~although~~ Constantinus certainly established the law that bishops must always be tried by bishops. We certainly do not find ^{however that the rule was} ~~any rule~~ laid down that an ecclesiastical umpire's decision must be regarded as not allowing of subsequent appeal to civil justice, ^{ecclesiastical} ~~or that such decisions~~ ^{seem} ~~were~~ ^{actually} ~~to have been~~ ~~to be enforced~~ ~~where need be~~, by the secular officers, ^{as some} ~~Some~~ of the evidence, afterwards to be discussed, of ecclesiastical proceedings aided by the civil arm in Alexandria, ^{will prove to us.} ~~would however lead us to believe that such precedents were established.~~ Here again, however, we may only have powers similar to those which Roman priests of high rank held with regard to their inferiors. ~~It is plain, of course, that in relation to the Donatist dispute the principle of trial by fellow-ecclesiastics was established as the normal procedure and as use and wont.~~ It is doubtful therefore if Constantine did

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Letter 161
(Hecet 52)

more than allow ~~that~~ ^{Probably} use and went to continue, ~~and thus~~ what ^{would be} Sozomen noted ~~was~~ rather a permission than a formal constitution of the episcopal courts. Thus Julian ^{perhaps,} when he forbade all political functions to the clerics made ^{probably} the first official recognition of a custom which his predecessors had neither ratified nor forbidden.

With the modification therefore that he did not interfere with her officials and their government when all went well, nor abrogate good and efficient methods of administering justice such as had sprung up within her, Constantine adopted the Church as a veritable part of the imperial system, and, as he did in the Roman priesthood, assumed a dominant place in her government. He called councils without a trace of the idea that he was intruding beyond his sphere. It was in his opinion plainly his duty to arrange religious matters for the best in all parts of his dominions. What faced Christianity in the first period of the Constantinian peace was therefore the possibility of becoming merely a Roman cult, one of two means chosen by the State of ~~keeping~~ the celestial power propitious. Constantine did not come to the Church as a personal adherent eager for forgiveness and with humble entreaty, as Philip Caesar was said to have come. He adopted no personal attitude towards her at this time, but as Emperor acknowledged her worship as legal, and her officials as officials of the Empire, and so part of his political organisation. Every immunity and gift was bestowed in a spirit which utterly ignored ^{all} ~~any~~ ideas of her essential independence ~~on of the fact that~~ ^{and of} her authority ^{as} ~~was~~ derived from a source external to the Empire. Quietly and unquestioningly, and therefore with terrible menace to her old theory of Heaven-derived right and authority, came this adoption into the system of Roman government. His reaching-out and taking of the Church to himself, his generous gifts, his courteous offers of assistance, his

benevolent patronage, but the patronage of a complete autocrat, if they were gestures of fealty to the God of the Christians, were those of one who would bow to Heaven only, and to whom the Church if she was to offer any ^{place} must offer her highest. They also exhibited the mind of one who regarded authority in religious affairs as resident in the civil government. The Caesars had legislated as to what gods should and should not be worshipped. Christianity had now been permitted on these terms. What was and what was not the permitted Christianity might soon be declared from the same source. This only was established that the Synods of bishops would ever be consulted by the Emperor in this matter much more than the colleges of Roman priests had been. Their organisation was so developed already that it could not well be ignored and, if it developed still further, its authority might still win for itself a force superior to these assumptions. Otherwise it was ~~incon~~^{highly} ~~ceivable~~^{probable} ~~but~~^{would} that the Church ~~should~~ sink to the same position as the pagan cult occupied in relation to its autocratic Pontifex Maximus, that is, that it would cease to be what is meant by a Church in any Christian conception of the word.

Para. / It was, of course, scarcely conceivable that a body emerging from the darkness of a period of bondage and persecution to the sunshine of imperial favour ~~should~~^{would} stand jealously on its dignity in regard to accepting royal gifts. There is no doubt that if the Churchmen had wished to avoid entirely the danger of being secularised they ~~should~~^{ought to} have taken their stand and refused to receive any benefits from the public treasury, until Constantine gave clear signs of ability to recognise the purpose of their foundation and the nature of their autonomy under their only Head, the Risen Christ. They ought to have made it clear that they could not be regarded as the servants of any particular political organisation. They should have claimed also, complete liberty to deal with all religious and moral questions

according to the methods of procedure which they had framed for their own government. Altogether it is not surprising, however, that they at first accepted what they received with little question. Such tokens of high favour were almost beyond the belief of a hitherto despised people. Constantine's aims, moreover, were plainly benevolent. They had full trust in his good will and, therefore, the majority of them were prepared to follow wherever he led them, forgetting ^{that his} ~~his~~ good intentions were not a proof that the results of his actions would be good for them, and apparently not noticing the low views he held as to the Church's purpose. In the commonly accepted opinion as to the Church of this period, however, there is much exaggeration of the extent of her secularisation.

This is usually due to want of recognition of the fact that it was ^{Secularisation, in the finer shades of the word's meaning today,} ~~not the fine shades of meaning attached to that word by us which~~ ^{which} ~~then~~ confronted her, but the very root-and-branch secularisation of being absorbed into the State as a mere cult, entirely without any economy of her own. That a few bishops became worldly, or that Constantine was allowed to do things beyond the power of ^{the} Civil Magistrate, ^{were} ~~were~~ mere errors which could be rectified in after-history, but had Christianity become a Roman cult it would have died with the Empire. It might have prolonged that body's life by the amount of vitality it took with it at first entrance into absorption, but it would not have had the eternal power of ^{renewal,} ~~renewal~~ which its own force and government derive from its continual

linking of its present rule with the beginnings of its traditions ^{with} and its perpetuated heavenly direction. The Church ^{only through} ~~of~~ leaning back on its past, whether conceived ^{of} in terms of Scripture or tradition, ^{and only through continually} ~~and~~ looking up to Heaven in its belief in a repeated miracle of inspiration ~~whether of ordination charisma or spiritual direction,~~ ^{possesses the} ~~is~~ ^{which is} undying power, capable of outliving all earthly institutions.

^{Paru.} ^{therefore} When she recovered from first surprise she might be expected by some emphasis upon the authoritative value of her historic foundation and upon the spiritual direction of the present embodiments of that authority, to show her sense of her danger and her determination to adhere to her liberties. At first she might more naturally be expected rather to use the opportunities, offered by State alliance, than resist the dangers, it might create.

When ~~the~~ ^{the} State ^{came} to the Church with an instinct to make her a function of itself, ^{since} ~~and~~ the Church had no ready-made principles of spiritual independence to oppose to it, ^{her} freedom was expressed by her independent life ^{naturally} ~~more~~ ^{rather} than in ~~theory~~ ^{theoretical} formulae. Accordingly, ~~and~~ while in the first period of the Constantinian peace, we notice her weakness in giving way to domination in many points, we must also take note of her influence, reacting upon the State, whereby she ~~also~~ exerted her power to seek to mould the imperial body to her ideals.

Troeltsch is of opinion that the Church of this entire period was too much "the child of battle and of victory" to mould the State, and ^{he} describes the results of Christian influence upon the social body as "extraordinarily trifling". ^(*) The writers who were nearer in time to these events probably made a juster estimate, however, and they attach great importance to the changes effected. ^{(A) Modern authorities} ~~Authorities~~ ^{moreover, although they} on jurisprudence, ^{do not} attribute all the Constantinian healthy legislation to Christian influence, ~~but~~ derive several of its enactments from that source. ⁽¹⁾ Considerable advance was made, even within the time that Constantine was Emperor, ^{only} of the West, in the direction of justice, humanity and purity. We have noted that celibacy was removed from a place of disadvantage and chastity protected. There were also severe laws against parricide. It was prohibited to brand criminals upon the face. ⁽²⁾ Measures were taken to prevent excessive cruelty to slaves. ⁽³⁾ There were severe laws against rape attempted upon widows or virgins which clearly shows Christian influence protecting a class greatly honoured within the Church, and general improvements in the condition of women may be attributed to the same source. There ^{was} ~~was~~ also a law prohibiting such superstitious magical rites as led to sensual

* Sozomen. p. 151. (A) e.g. Eusebius. V.C. IV. 15 ff. Sozomen. I. 8. ^{also Libanius} (Basel. ii. 714b)
(1) See De Rhoer. Dissertio de effectu religionis Christ. in jurisprudentiam Romanam. (2) Cod. Justin. lib. 1. 119. (3) Cod. Theod. ~~IV~~ Tit. 8. leg. 161.
loc. cit. 194, 197. Cod. Theod. ~~IV~~ Tit. 24.

Libanius does not attribute the good influence of Constantian legislation to Christianity but remarks upon its favour to lower classes.

excess, whereas, with liberality of mind, such semi-magical practices as might be regarded as seeking to do beneficent works were uncensured. A new spirit had come into law-making, and it cannot be ignored as evidence of the manner in which the Church took proper advantage of the situation so created, and also of how Constantine responded to proper counsels in this respect. There was much still permitted which the Church would doubtless have forbidden and much which Christians of to-day would deplore, ~~Such a law for example as that against incest was~~ ^{but} ~~however a tremendous gain and~~ we must note the ability of the Church to effect a part of her purpose from which she had hitherto been debarred. She had legislated for her own as within an Ark or a family circle ^{for these were the current smiles for the Church,} but now only could she be said to be discharging her full function when the influence of her higher teaching was being made effective for the general body of the people.

^{The effect of} ~~Steady Christian influence over governors was also being~~ ^{upon legislation continued throughout} ~~the reign of Constantine, but in the earliest period we have clear evidence that secured~~ With adulation of the Emperor mingled, ~~we can be certain,~~ a great amount of counsel and helpful suggestion. Deliberate steps were ^{also} ~~also~~ taken to keep subordinate officials within the sphere of religious advice. In the seventh canon of the Council of Arles, ¹¹ for example, it was laid down "Concerning governors (praesidibus) who as believers come to the governorship, that when they have been promoted, they shall receive ecclesiastical communicatory letters so that in whatever place they are in office, attention shall be paid to them by the bishop of the same - and when, and if, they shall begin to do anything contrary to (Christian) discipline, then only shall they be excluded from communion. Similarly with those who desire municipal office". The canon corrects a canon of an older Synod which ordered all magistrates during the period of their office to withdraw from the Church. The state of things was now changed. The believer who became now an imperial or municipal magistrate was to be treated very differently. His withdrawal from Church communion was ~~only~~

(1) Cf. e.g. *Codex Justinian* *Magis* p. 220 + 225.

(1) ~~Codex Justinian~~ *Magis* p. 220 + 225.

(2) *Mansi* Vol. II. *Hofsch* I. 490. 184.

only to be necessitated by any breach of order such as would cause any believer to come under censure. He was to receive indeed special care. For the sake of impartiality, governors were usually sent out of their native country. A Christian, so appointed, would now go with special commendatory letters to the bishop of his district. He would be guarded from the temptation to speculation and to injustice by the support and advice of this priestly mentor. The difficulty and importance of his position made the Churchmen feel such special care was well justified. It is said that the merits of Christians as high officers of state had always been recognised.⁽¹⁾ Their value would be now increased when they were no longer persons forced to suffer temporary ex-communication but ^{were} rather specially under the influence and guardianship of their bishop. We see one example of how Christianity at this period assumed its public duty. The Church at Arles, giving this kindly encouragement to Christians becoming magistrates and providing so that the support and guidance of the clergy might be given to them in their office, reveals that the duty of good citizenship in the empire was being learned. Such legitimate reward did Constantine win for the empire.

The third canon might seem ^{as it is usually interpreted} ~~at first~~ even more strongly indicative of a strong feeling of patriotic duty towards the earthly fatherland:- "That those who throw down their arms in peace, shall abstain from communion." A commentator explains this decision as signifying that many Christians ^{had} ~~and~~ scruples with regard to military service, and refused to take arms or deserted, and that the Synod, considering the changes introduced by Constantine, set forth the obligation that Christians should serve, because the Church ^{was} ~~is~~ at peace under a ^{friendly} ~~friendly to Christians~~ prince. ⁽²⁾ It is very certain that "projicere", the word here used, means nearly

(1) Euseb. Ch. Hist. viii. 1. (2) So Aubespine notes in Mansi ~~II~~ II p. 492.

always "to throw away" or "throw~~ing~~ down". There is however, an instance or two⁽¹⁾ where it signifies "to hold out" or "extend" and even "to hold in front"^{or} "oppose", and it is altogether more probable, therefore, to suppose that we have here an ordinance forbidding the profession of the peace-time warrior, i.e. of the gladiator. Such an ordinance is much more worthy of the Church and is not insignificant. It probably, however, had a double effect~~and~~ ^{also} ~~it~~ sanctioned the profession of arms for the genuine soldier. We know that despite the military oaths, increasing numbers of Christian soldiers had served in the army, but perhaps there had been a severance during their campaigning from Church-rites, in the same manner as had ^{been used with} ~~affected~~ magistrates. If so, this was now by implication withdrawn and the soldier of the empire was kept in full communion with his faith, with all that ^{towards} ~~this would mean~~ ^{increased} ~~that meant of increased~~ efficiency and faithfulness.

Also worthy of note is the enactment that Christians are not to become jockeys and grooms of the races in the Circus, or ^{to be} connected with the theatres. We now see how the Church makes her voice heard in regard to questions of general morals. She is no longer silenced by fear of attack, and her cleansing influence begins to affect wide spheres. Backed by civil legislation, which, as it were, brought on the moral laggards, ecclesiastical enactments adopted a still higher tone, wherein might reside an impetus towards social betterment of tremendous power.

These decrees hint also, however, at the fact that converts of a type such as had probably never before been received were now offering themselves for Church candidature. We can well imagine that under the favour of the Emperors, men more or less worldly and frivolous in their outlook on life adopted the new faith. It is a fact, however, disagreeable that a great multitude of people do

(1) e.g. *Scutum prae* (*Livy*) *projecto prae se clipeo*. (id. 32.25) and *prae se ad pedes alacrius* (*Cicero Sest. II. 26*)

not think deeply for themselves in religious matters, and these no doubt now presented themselves in numbers for admission to the Church. They provided her with several problems, and one of these was the subject of ~~these different~~ decrees of the Council of Arles, namely, what occupations are legal for Christians to follow. The army and civil service received approbation, but the great numbers of State-servants whose employment was connected with the questionable amusements of the populace were vetoed. We cannot fail to see the significant political and social influence which the Church thus wielded. Sycophantic ideas might have urged that gladiators and jockeys were servants of the Emperor, and that, so long as he and the public conscience permitted their performances, they were blameless personally in their offices. The tone of the Church was in all this still that of its own heroic independent legislation, and of fearless assumption of authority in all spheres rather than a withdrawal from the secular region. Nothing could be further from the truth, in view of these developments, than the theory that the Church, staggered by favour and overcome by flattery, became a ready instrument in the State's hands for material purposes. All the time that the great influence of the Emperor was put upon her for this purpose, she rather like a stream dammed up for long, ^{houred} ~~paved~~ the flood of her forceful morality upon social institutions, ^{and showed signs of her native power} ~~as if she were the patron and supporter who sought~~ to use the imperial machinery for her own purposes. Which would be function of the other was ^{therefore} ~~from the beginning~~ a doubtful issue, ~~if it was necessary that one should succumb to the other.~~ ^{Issue. If indeed} The fervour and idealism of the ecclesiastical body would give it great advantages in the struggle in view ~~body did not make its final victory a foregone conclusion in view~~ of the decadence and the profound disloyalty which affected the civil administration, ~~if it was necessary that one power should finally succumb to the other.~~

The one great disadvantage from which the Church was to

labour in this mental strife was however this very influx of new believers, who would also find their way to high offices, and who had not her inherited ideas as to ecclesiastical sovereignty. Similar new types of converts had caused weakness in her ranks during the late persecutions. The consciousness of this lack of homogeneity in her membership was the strength of the sectarian divisions of which the Donatists were an example. Now this formidable sect had come into conflict with the State, and ^{had exhibited} ~~defined for~~ ~~itself~~, as a result, another ^{mode of reaction to the Imperial} ~~root principle of ecclesiastical self-~~ ^{policy.} ~~consciousness.~~ They, as we saw, were not averse at first to the imperial authority being recognised to settle matters of dispute between Churchmen. They had indeed themselves appealed to ~~him~~ ^{it} when deprived of justice, as they thought, by their brethern. As descendants spiritually of the Montanist school, they found the Catholic body too formal, too legalistic, and too worldly for the culture of the genuine spiritual life, and these ideas were more effectually moving in their separatist action, ^{we may believe,} than the question as to whether Felix of Aptunga was a ^{traitor} ~~traitor~~ or no. ^{Nevertheless} ~~Thus~~, when the Emperor gave judgment against them and ^{made some attempt to} ~~used means of compulsion to~~ force them back to ^{unity} ~~allegiance~~, they were more firmly fixed than ever in their revolt against the body Catholic which had already seemed to them over-secular. "What have we to do with the Emperor"? became soon their tone of thought, and they came to stigmatise as adulterous the connection of Church and State. There is nothing to surprise us in this volte-face, the characteristic exhibition of the Church's attitude to the State throughout her history. Again and again she will use civil power, and as often lay it down and deny its right to interference, if it seeks to step from the place of ^{a help-meat} ~~servant~~ to that of ^a ~~in her especial sphere.~~ master. In ~~this~~ much more than in the mere ^{verbal} ~~expression~~ of ^{her} ~~spiritual independence~~ ^{does she show} ~~she shows~~ her sense of

^{as well as}
~~having~~ that right ~~and~~ her absolute confidence in her own judgments.
A Church disappointed ^{by the Civil Court's refusal to execute her} ~~of execution by the civil power of findings~~
~~of her own courts~~ has again and again in history acted in this way.
Viewed seriously, this conduct is seen not to be mere vacillation
between two ideas, but the consistent idea that the State ^{in spiritual matters} ~~is servant~~
^{may be of service, if it will, but never may direct and govern the}
~~of the Church to obey her, and not to direct her~~
~~ecclesiastical authority.~~

The Donatist and Catholic Churchmen are thus seen in this period reacting to the State alliance and the principle on which it was conceived by the Emperor in definite ways. It is difficult to define dogmas which are in process of arising to consciousness without giving them a definiteness which is only appropriate at a later date. It may be safely said, however, that the genesis of a doctrine of the Church's duty as owing to the general Christendom of State and people is to be detected as arising in this period; and, apart altogether from the hypothesis of the episcopal forum being then established, the Synodal method whereby Constantine allowed the Donatist controversy to be settled and the hard persuasion which he had to use to get Caecilianus in particular to submit to any other, was indication that this new feeling of State-loyalty did not obscure the old sense of independence. The Donatists on the other hand whose protest had been first upon a matter of internal discipline, and, who as their appeal to Caesar showed, had then no scruples on the question of State-alliance, had pronounced their early disappointment with regard to the State's influence upon Church-affairs. Thus in the very first period of the imperialising movement, ^{another} ~~another~~ main line of counteraction became evident namely, the separation of such Christian bodies as were desirous of maintaining independence. This answer of the Church's spiritual freedom to the attack of Constantine was at this period crude and unformed, like the attack itself. There emerged

the dark haughty Donatus, unloving to foe and overbearing to friend, and in his company ^{though perhaps not till somewhat later appeared} a militant body of protesters called Circumcellions, their war-clubs in their hands. They were not beautiful manifestations of the spirit of resistance to the secularising movements of the time. They exhibited, however, the retort of some live wire in the Church-conscience to the Emperor's present policy. More enduring and more constructive manifestations of it were to follow.

CHAPTER IV.

CONSTANTINE SOLE EMPEROR.

PIETY TOWARDS GOD.



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CHAPTER IV.

CONSTANTINE'S POLICY AS SOLE EMPEROR.

Licinius was partner with Constantine in issuing the Edict of Milan. It is generally assumed that he gave a reluctant acquiescence to its terms. He was not a Christian, but Eusebius in his address at ^a ~~the~~ dedication ^(c. 315 A.D.) at Tyre, spoke of him also as a prince defying the ancient idols and acknowledging only the one and true God. "Our princes" he said, ⁽¹⁾ "confess Christ the Son of God as the universal King of all, and proclaim him the Saviour in their edicts, inscribing his righteous deeds and victories over the impious with royal characters, on indelible records, and in the midst of that city which holds sway over the earth". This is rhetorical exaggeration as we know even in application to Constantine, but it may stand as evidence that Licinius at first carried out in his dominions the principles of toleration, or even of a more hearty favouring of the Christian faith. We see that under his rule the Church began freely to develop her corporate life: "Bone came to bone" is the phrase of the historian. Important Synods met. The enthusiasm of new liberty did not, however, in that so lately persecuted region, result in any marked movements towards patriotic action such as characterised Western Synods of similar date. On the contrary the Church, according to the evidence of the canons of Ancyra and Neo-Caesarea, was occupied rather with the difficulties born of the persecution itself, and the question of the "Lapsed" ^{Bulked} ~~bulked~~ largely in their ^{deliberations.} ~~deliberations.~~ ^{decrees of these Synods} ~~decrees.~~ They ^{also} show, however, that other grave moral delinquencies beside apostasy were before them, revealing perhaps

(1) Ch. Hist. X. 4. Lactantius (?) De mort. Persecut. celebrates similarly with joy the joint-rule of Maximian & Eusebius. (2) Hefele p. 201, Mansi II. 514 ff.

the effect of present prosperity. In addition we note that town and metropolitan clergy were claiming privileges over their country brethren, and that there must have existed in some quarters a certain amount of friction between neighbouring ecclesiastics. High clerical office was apparently desired then from motives of no ~~high~~^{altruistic} type. There is no documentary evidence that Licinius gave financial support to the Church such as might encourage this, but prestige of office would become itself a desirable thing when the cleric was recognised as a part of the imperial governing machine. We see afterwards at Alexandria what power a bishop might wield as distributor of the State bounty of bread etc., to the poor. Licinius would inevitably, one would think, in following the Edict of Milan's terms, recognise Church officials for this purpose, whence may have arisen a good deal of this unspiritual ambition for Church governorship. Otherwise we know that a fruit of leisure was the abundance of theological dispute. The Eastern Emperor when he forbade the bishops to absent themselves from their own dioceses for ^{the} purpose of visiting Synods and Councils, may have been seeking to prevent the spread of angry disputation. He may, however, have been merely suspicious, without cause, ~~fearing~~ that such assemblies were civil dangers, and in ~~that~~^{that} case his attitude ~~of suspicion~~ would prevent the manifestation of any warm Church support for himself or his government.

The chief effects of the new peace in these domains were thus a lowering of spiritual ~~temperament~~^{temperature}, which the Church dealt with from within by a rather formal code of discipline. There was no impetus towards work on behalf of the common weal. The Eastern Church has ever had the characteristic of a quietistic, contemplative type of thought which is suspicious of the secular, and so now its reaction was in the glorification of ascetic withdrawal

from the world and movements towards monasticism. In Egypt this ideal of life had already laid a strong hold upon spiritual minds and its devotees were held in high honour. Anthony had built his monastery so early as 305 A.D., but we know that he retired to greater seclusion than ever after the overthrow of Maximin. Pachomius adopted the ascetic life after Constantine's victory at the Milvian Bridge in which he took a share, and the youthful Hilarion must have sought his cell at Gaza about the year 315. So the Eastern Church retorted to State-adoption, and to the influx of less enthusiastic converts which it brought with it, by throwing out alongside herself a still more enthusiastic company of believers. She withdrew her own life as it were from the Catholic body, where it might be harmed, and formed new types of religious communities more similar, as was believed, to the Church of earlier days. Further developments of this movement we shall have occasion to note later.

The rule of Licinius in Church-affairs whether from suspicion or not, was quite unsuccessful. Eusebius⁽¹⁾ represents him as adopting the role of persecutor by irritating and needless enactments. He ordered, for example, that female teachers should be appointed to instruct Christian women and forbade their being under tuition of any other. Some irregularities might have caused this enactment, and also, considering the crowded state of their now inadequate buildings, he may not have been entirely without right when he ordered some bodies of Christians to meet in the open. Eusebius indeed asserts that he gave hygienic reasons for this regulation, and these may not have been merely satirical. As however, his relations with Constantine grew embittered, he apparently adopted a policy of persecution. The two emperors, knowing each other's ambitions, had just cause for mutual distrust.

(1) Vita Const. I. 53.

Four years after the victory of Milvian Bridge, came their first estrangement, when they were reconciled not without loss to the Eastern Empire of considerable territory. In 322 however Constantine who was engaged in war with the Sarmatians succeeded in defeating them and in taking prisoner their king. He had a special coinage struck in token of this victory. Licinius, chagrined at his previous defeat by his colleague of the West, was nursing enmity against him, ^{it is said,} and first of all took offence at the invasion of his bounds, which Constantine's armies had made in pursuing the Sarmatians, and then shewed his spleen by refusing

(1) to allow the Sarmatian coinage to pass current in his territory. This was an insult which could not be overlooked, even if Constantine had not another pretext for indignation against him; but, ^{according to another account of the origin of the war,⁽²⁾} ~~as it was~~ Licinius, probably because he feared that they were desirous of putting the Western patron of their liberties in his place, and that all the Christians' prayers were offered on behalf of Constantine and not of their own emperor, had renewed horrors unknown since the days of Diocletian. The ^{Nicaean} ~~Nicaean~~ Canons witness to the cruel facts of ^{this} ~~the~~ persecution; and ^{and Sozomen} ~~and~~ Eusebius, ^{both our sources,} ~~an Eastern~~ ^{both Eastern bishops} knew the state of affairs in that part of the Empire.

The Western Emperor had been developing perhaps with deliberate intent a more and more Christian policy and he now invaded Licinius' territory avowedly as the champion of the new faith, hoping thus for the enthusiastic support of a great portion of the people. The Church alone could bind the East and West together. This was not the time to hold the balance evenly between Christian and pagan, for, if he was to be ruler of the whole Empire, only the Christians could help him. He set out on the expedition therefore with the avowed purpose of liberating the Eastern Church. He made the war a religious one, and had with him a considerable

- (1) Sozomen gives this piece of information as to the occasion of hostilities.
(2) Eusebius V.C. I. 51.

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attendance of clergy to pray for the success of his arms. Higher motives than those of mere expediency moved him to this course no doubt. He might well feel himself somewhat awed, when he found that he was in the position of exercising his arms on behalf of so important a thing to the Empire as ^{the} proper veneration of the Deity. It is almost certain that he was becoming educated in Christian knowledge, and his mind, no doubt, was inclining more and more to that personal faith. The suspicion remains, however, that a great degree of opportunism mingled with his motives at this period. The opinion of those heathen historians, who assert that his personal character and the spirit of his administration deteriorated in this crisis of his career, is not due entirely to the prejudice created by the fact that thereafter his favouring of Christianity became more marked. The whole evidence of tradition ^{however,} apart from the legends attaching to the Labarum, is that it was after his victory over Licinius that he became an avowed patron of the new faith. By some, the most ill-natured, it is connected with his execution of his son, Crispus and his nephew **L**icinianus, which were followed ^{it is alleged,} by the death under his orders of Fausta. The legend was, ~~however,~~ made current that seeking expiation for these crimes he could find no promise of forgiveness except from a Christian priest of Spain, by whom no doubt is indicated **H**osius of Cordova. The story has little value but it serves to give the date when Constantine's predilection for Christianity became public. It was undoubtedly the period of this victory.

Moreover it is apparent that open favouring of Christianity had become politically prudent. The policy of Milan had failed in the Eastern dominions, whereas Constantine could not ~~fail to~~ ^{but} be aware that his more hearty action in the West had been

noted by the Oriental clerics, who had sighed for such a regime in their own territory. He had now a fuller and deeper appreciation of the Christian Church and of its efficiency for social unification. He had had glimpses of the firm bond of union in which believers lived. Putting aside the question of ~~his~~ ^{other} motives, ~~other~~ than ~~the~~ those of a ruler now about to seek to weld the great Empire into one, we can easily see that the Church must have profoundly appealed to him as a unique instrument, whereby ~~at once to~~ ^{he might} secure a high sanction for his position on the throne, and an ~~efficient~~ ^{effective means of} instrument for maintaining loyalty and discipline in all provinces. Treason against a champion of the faith would be an unthought of crime in a body already disposed to submission even to anti-Christian rulers. For the purpose of governing the provincials the clerics would be invaluable allies of the civil magistrates. Constantine had that ability as a ruler which gives his actions the value of an indication of public as well as private opinion, and so we may take it that ~~not more personal idiosyncrasy~~ ^{but} a keen perception of the position of affairs, moved him in these respects. The time had come when Christianity had to be reckoned by the State as the religion destined to dominate the people. The throne, which had hitherto maintained its right to rule by vague polytheistic sanctions and the theory of Caesar-godhead, looked elsewhere for support, and found it in the theory of a divine appointment to liberate the Faith of Christ from persecution, and ^{to} exalt it to its rightful place. Heathen faith and practice were to be gradually depressed from the honour of public recognition, in the hope that the new religion might completely ^e take over their former position. Intolerance however was not to be exhibited ~~both~~ from motives ^{both} of humanity and ^{of} expediency.

Such a policy ^{found} ~~finds~~ its expression in the Edict which was

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its first enactment, The Edict Respecting Piety to God and the Christian Religion.⁽¹⁾ This law commenced with a long preamble showing how persecutors of the Christian faith had ever met with a disastrous death of severe suffering, or had dragged out an ignominious existence worse than death, while those who maintained a careful observance of it had always been the recipients of abundant blessings from God. The Emperor declared then, accordingly, that he was desirous of supporting the Christian Church, and commanded that all the enactments made against it by Licinius should be reversed. All who had been banished were to be brought back again and their property restored, and all, enslaved or forced to work in the Mines or Women's Apartments, were to go free. Those, who had been deprived of military rank on account of their faith, were to take up again their former status or to accept honourable discharge. The property of martyrs was to go to their next of kin, or, where relatives could not be found, to the general funds of the Church. Any who had seized or otherwise gained possession of Christian property, were to deliver it up, and to give an account of the amount of benefit they had derived from holding it, and to entreat the royal pardon for their offence; nor would the Emperor accept the statement that such people had thought it no sin to become possessors of the property of innocent people. Those who tried to defend their conduct by such pleas would be punished. The Treasury was to restore all Church-property which was in its possession, and those who had bought such property or received it as a gift, were censured for their avarice though assured of pardon. The tombs of martyrs were made over to the Church. The Edict concluded with an earnest exhortation to all to worship God, and to give thanks for the great deliverance wrought on their behalf.

(1) Given by Euseb. in Vita Const. II. 24-42.

It will be seen that the tone of this law was much bolder than that of the Edict of Milan. The possessors of Church property were not only ordered to restore it, but censured for ever having appropriated it. The enactments on behalf of Christians were not apologetically introduced as founded on common justice but the spirit in which they were framed was clearly one of rejoicing in a triumphant liberation of the faith. This passage deserves to be quoted in full:—⁽¹⁾ "Now with such a mass of impiety oppressing the human race, and the commonwealth in danger of being utterly destroyed, as if by the agency of some powerful disease, and therefore needing powerful and effectual aid, what was the remedy and the relief which the Divinity devised for these evils? I, myself, then was the instrument, whose services **He** chose and esteemed suited for the accomplishment of **His** will. Accordingly, beginning at the remote Britannic ocean,⁽²⁾ and the regions where the sun sinks beneath the horizon, through the aid of the divine power, I banished and utterly removed every form of evil which prevailed, in the hope that the human race, enlightened through my instrumentality, might be recalled to a due observance of the holy laws of God and at the same time, our most blessed faith might prosper under the guidance of His almighty hand. Believing, therefore, that this most excellence service had been confided to me as a special gift, I proceeded as far as the regions of the East which being under the pressure of severe calamities seemed to demand more effectual remedies at my hands".

(3) He gave still clearer proofs, ^{it would appear} ~~however~~, that he intended to favour the Christian Faith more than Paganism. In his choice of new governors for the provinces ^{we are told that} he selected Christians in preference to others and forbade all high officials to offer sacrifice. This prohibition, in view of the general laxity of the heathen with

(1) Loc. cit. (2) This reminds that Constantine first received the acclamations of rank at York, on the death of his father. (3) So Euseb. tells us. V.C. II. 44.

regard to the things of their religion, was not of course such a hardship as the command of the persecutors, that all officials should sacrifice, ^{and it is quite possible} ~~It showed, however,~~ that the Emperor did not desire polytheistic practices to enter ^{over prominently} into the machinery of his government, or that what he was now pleased to regard as a bad example should be set by dignataries of the Empire. His wish ^{certainly} was that his people should become Christians, and he published a circular letter in the Eastern provinces for this end, in which he laid before them what he described as his own hopes of future happiness. These appeared to be founded on reflection upon the vengeance which had overtaken all persecutors of religion and his own consciousness that he had ever been a patron of the faith, and even an aggressive champion on its behalf. In this letter he declared, that the Labarum, which, ever since his campaign against Maxentius, had been his battle-standard, was a sacred sign of God. He expressed his intention of restoring and rebuilding the Christian Church. He refused to persecute the heathen ^{and} ~~but~~ left those who delighted in error in tranquility, but, at the same time, desired that all should betake themselves to the clear light of God revealed in his Son. He called ⁽²⁾ the pagan places of worship "temples of lies" and attempted to prove the folly of polytheism by the argument that a multitude of deities would cause the Universe to be in a state of perpetual strife and confusion. He concluded his epistle thus:- (1) "Once more let none use that to the detriment of another which he may himself have received on conviction of its truth; and let everyone apply what he has understood and known to the benefit of his neighbour, if otherwise let him relinquish the attempt. For it is one thing voluntarily to undertake the conflict for immortality, another to compel others to do so from the fear of punishment. These are our words, and we

(1) This letter is given by Euseb. Y.C. II. 48. (2) Ibid. II. 56-58. (3) II. 60 tr. M. Giffert.

have enlarged on these topics more than our ordinary clemency would have dictated because we were unwilling to dissemble or be false to the true faith; and the more so since we understand there are some who say that the rites of the heathen temples and the power of darkness have been entirely removed. We should indeed have earnestly recommended such removal to all men, were it not that the rebellious spirit of those wicked errors still continues obstinately fixed in the minds of some, so as to discourage the hope of any general restoration of mankind to the ways of truth".

He expected, however, that when the disabilities attaching to Christianity were removed there would be a large increase in its adherents. Accordingly by another statute ⁽¹⁾ he commanded the heightening of oratories and the enlargement in length and breadth of the Churches. He admonished the provincial governors not to be at all sparing of expenditure in this direction, and empowered the bishops to demand freely whatever was needful for this work. It is interesting to note that it was, in connection with this step of Constantine's, that he wrote his first letter ⁽²⁾ to his future biographer and most fervent admirer, Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea. They had met before when the emperor was a young man, attendant at the court of Diocletian, but it was at this stage that they began a friendship and intercourse which, although the bishop is reticent on the point, must have had considerable influence upon the ecclesiastical policy of Constantine's government. They were in many ways similar, both were latitudinarians ⁱⁿ ~~on~~ matters of belief, both were interested in the apologetic side of theology, and both were agreed as to the wonderful gifts and supreme right of the Emperor. It might not be altogether wrong to conjecture that not a few of Constantine's discourses and sermons on religious topics were composed or at least

(1) In Euseb. V.C. II. 45. (2.) loc. cit II. 46.

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revised for him by the Caeserean bishop, although, in loyalty to his hero, no mention is made of this fact in his biography.

Reviewing the change which the rupture with Licinius and the annexation of the Eastern Empire made in Constantine's religious policy, we see that a reversion was made to the tactics of the Edict of Nicomedia, though it was now the pagans and not the Christians who suffered disabilities. As in that law complete immunity from persecution was enforced. No one was to be compelled to adopt any particular worship, but ~~the~~ absolute liberty of Milan was encumbered ^{once more by preferences and conditions.} ~~with restricting conditions.~~ It was diminished in its scope. It did not apply freely to all ranks, for proconsuls, vice-prefects, and provincial generals were not allowed to sacrifice. The old neutrality of language disappeared. Constantine characterised heathenism by epithets similar to those formerly used by Galerius with regard to Christianity. He let it be seen that he suffered pagan beliefs grudgingly. He was impatient of their errors and strongly urged his people to accept what he plainly showed to be his own faith. His edict to the Eastern provinces was in effect a transliteration of the older Nicomedian decree with the substitution of the word 'Christian' wherever 'heathen' before appeared, and vice-versa.

This change of front was not entirely due to the difficulty of maintaining the policy of Milan. We have seen that what gave Constantine ^a great ^{advantage} ~~power~~ over Licinius was the disaffection of the Christians towards the latter's government. He knew that he could not assume the role of champion of Christianity in the East, and still maintain the appearance of neutrality in the West. His careful nursing of the Church had had excellent results in the West, and he might well believe that in the East, where already her numbers were so much greater⁽¹⁾, similar treatment would

(1) Harack's coloured map in 'Mission & Expansion of Christianity' is here illuminating.

yield even greater success. He found himself at the head of a huge unwieldy Empire the extent of which made peaceful rule impossible unless he had something more than force to aid him. His popularity had stood him long in good stead, but he had no reason for expecting to be regarded as anything else than a foreign usurper in the East, except by the Christians. He felt he had now no reason for fearing to offend paganism. A bitter attack upon it might rouse it, but there was no need to court its favour or even pretend neutrality towards it. It was dying, or at all events too weak, either to help him or to cause him trouble. The Christian Church, however, could give him aid. Did she not rule already in West and East? Were not her members bound together by a surer tie than that afforded by any political organisation? Was not her teaching concerned with peace and good order? Was not her face set against risings and seditions? Were not her bishops and clerics instruments ready to his hand to keep his subjects in tranquility, and to rule them with a stronger hand than his civil representatives could wield? She stretched into all parts of his dominions. She alone made the Empire in any sense one. If, therefore, he could keep his domination over her, he could remain the sole emperor, otherwise the task was beyond him. He was prepared, therefore, to go further than he had previously gone, in the direction of conciliating the Church. He was not indeed, at this stage, baptised, because such action was scarcely expected in accordance with the common practice of the times, but he made haste expressly to declare himself a Christian, and moreover an active and enthusiastic one. In return he expected the no less zealous support of the bishops, and his policy was so far justified, for he received it in full measure. We need only read the glowing words of Eusebius to see that the Church responded loyally to the

generosity of her patron, and Constantine might feel that so long as the Church was loyal, he and his government were safe.

The eloquent Julian in one of his panegyrics compares the imperial task to that of a charioteer who controls high-spirited horses, unaccustomed and unwilling to run together under a single yoke. The Christian Church must have appealed to Constantine as an admirable harness to secure the unity of action necessary to draw the car of state smoothly to its appointed goal. There were, however, as he was soon to learn certain flaws in this scheme. The bitter days of persecution had left behind their divisions among the persecuted. Mutual accusations of lapse and of high-handed excommunications, during these trying experiences, had been rife. Not only so but the immunities and privileges which the Emperor was now giving to the clergy, the handsome gifts which from time to time he sent to them, and the honour he was always paying them, accentuated trouble. The clerics were now more than ever persons of power in the State. Bishoprics were desirable offices. Whereas, before, a disappointed seeker for preferment might comfort himself, that at least he would enjoy the safety incompatible with that dignity in the hour of danger, in these more peaceful days, he learned to envy more than ever the wealth, power, and high dignity, which his successful rival carried off. The unscrupulous might even try to question and overthrow such appointments. These were made in a more or less democratic fashion, in the presence of all the people; and such spiritual direction as was sought might be regarded by the dissatisfied as uncertain. At all events any, who through ecclesiastical discipline, whether on account of alleged heresy, lapse, or immorality, had suffered deposition might tend to press for a reconsideration of their case, and where they could find support among their fellow-clergy or the populace, might even

(1) On procedure at elections see Athan. *Cyclical Epist.* § 4.

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reassume their office.⁽¹⁾ Further, as the larger cities offered a bishop a position of greater importance, such sees were more eagerly sought after, and it came about that a vacancy in any of these was a cause for caballing and general agitation even in parts far off from it. A tendency, also, hitherto unknown, sprang up whereby bishops already ordained to one diocese sought translation to another.⁽²⁾ Bishops being thus powerful and scarcely less ambitious of preferment than civil governors, there were materials even in the Church, which otherwise seemed a power so likely to unify the empire, ready to be worked into most lively and acrimonious dissensions. It needed but some deep-reaching cause of dispute to set all these factors into operation, to arouse the most wide-spread animosity, plottings and counter-plottings, intrusions of undesirable bishops into sees, depositions of one faction of the clergy by another, and, as the general public grew heated, even rioting and outrage.

A cause of dissension was in fact existent even before ⁽³⁾ Constantine came to the East. *The following is the traditional account of its outbreak.* Some time previously, Alexander, the Bishop of Alexandria, in the ordinary exercise of his duties attempted, perhaps over-fully, to explain the great doctrine of the Trinity. One of his Presbyters, Arius, by name, detected in what he said traces of the view called Sabellianism, which sets forth the three persons of the Godhead in the light of three different manifestations or activities of one God. Opposing this error he developed a position, which seemed to his superior even more shocking, namely, that as the Father begat the Son, there was a time when the Son was not. This little spark kindled fire enough. Alexandria had been the home of philosophic studies. The sophists and their descendants were now the Christian divines. In the West, even then intensely practical, such a dispute could not have caused

(1) Colluthus at Alexandria had done this. A presbyter ordained by him kept his office (Athan. Apol. Arian. § 46 + 77. Cf. the case of Secundus + Thomas (Soc. I. 6)

(2) For severe condemnation of this see letter of Bp. Julius (Athan. Apol. Arian. § 24)

(3) See. Euseb. V.C. II. 61. Socrat. I. 5.

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the tremendous sensation which this soon excited throughout all Egypt, Libya and Upper Thebes. Arius may be given the credit of sincerity and also of believing that the point upon which he insisted was one of importance. He no doubt felt that his theory preserved the Christian doctrine from the danger of losing the pre-existent being of our Lord in some mere aspect or quality of the Godhead. Also it seemed to him logical⁽¹⁾ to say that since the Word was begotten, He was not before He was begotten, and so had a beginning of existence; that since He is good by His freewill, He must be capable of change in His nature; and that His glory was given Him before by God, only because God by foreknowledge knew that He would win it by His good ~~works~~^{works}. The whole matter so appealed to him that he popularised his theories in verse, in a work called the "Thalia", where, in a strange mixture of rhapsody and theological argument, he propagated these same views.

"The Unoriginate made the Son, an origin of things generated;

"And advanced Him as a Son to Himself by adoption.

"He has nothing proper to God in proper subsistence.

"For He is not equal, no nor one in substance with Him." (2)

This was very bold and when the people might be heard singing such rhymes in the streets of Alexandria, Alexander, the Bishop, had need to take action. It may be that his original statement of the Trinitarian doctrine had, through lack of carefulness, smacked of Sabellianism, but here seemed to be something worse than mere inaccuracy. The equality of the persons in the Godhead was in apparent danger of being denied, and as Arius worked out his opinions more and more, a position was being reached which subordinated the Son to the level of created things. Those who sided with him might use the phrase "created before eternal times", but the logic of their position, as their opponents saw it, was that

(1) For the views of Arius see Athan. "To the Egypt. Bishops" § 12. "In Defence of Nicene Definition" Discourse II and elsewhere.

(2) Quoted by Athan. "Concerning the ~~Arminian~~ ^{Arminian} Councils" § 15.

the Son was not God at all except by adoption. Alexander accordingly assembled a Synod of nearly a hundred bishops of Egypt and Libya in the year 320. At this Synod the affirmative answer of the Arians to the question, whether the Word of God could change like the devil, was so offensive, that they were excommunicated in number 14 Presbyters and two bishops.

Eusebius, not the historian but a mere complex and ambitious bishop of this name, who had left his see of Berytus to assume the more influential charge of Nicomedia, and who probably also was jealous of the Alexandrian See, took the excommunicated Arians into his protection and gave them commendatory letters to the Churches round about. ^{These facts are confirmed in a letter (1)} ~~Alexander chagrined at this high handed~~ ~~which Alexander, angered by this unneighbourliness, wrote to the Churches~~ ~~action was tempted to write an encyclical letter to the Church~~ ^{But} generally, which had the unfortunate effect, not of securing, as he had hoped, homologation of his council's decision, but of raising widespread disputation for and against Arius in every quarter. Alexander now received letters from all sides and of every temper, condemning or approving what he had done. Among these was one, mild in tone, from Eusebius, the historian, endeavouring to show that Arianism was not so dark as it had been painted. Eusebius of Nicomedia, finding so much support for his protégés, ^{perhaps (2)} called a Synod at Bithynia, restored the Arians, and wrote to all parts, even to Alexander himself, requiring all Christians to hold communion with them. By their authority Arius was allowed to have his own Church in Alexandria, and to assemble the people, and so he continued a thorn in the side of the venerable bishop. He was aided moreover in his divisive work by another set of malcontents, ^{according to Athanasius} ~~and he also alleges that Eusebius fomented these~~ ~~called Melitians, Eusebius is alleged to have fomented these~~ disorders and encouraged the various parties. Alexandria became thus the cockpit of an extraordinary dispute. Jests were made of

(1) better preserved in Socrates Bk. I. c. VI.

(2) So we are told by Sozomen I. 15, but Athan. (Concerning Arim. & Seleuc. Councils) ^{→ 22.} calls the Council assembled at Jerusalem after Nicaea "the first of their Councils", i.e. of the Eusebians, or Arians as he would esteem them.

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it in the theatres, and the Arians in particular, ^{it is alleged,} took the controversy into the market places⁽¹⁾, addressing foolish questions to children and women, such as, "He who is did He make Him who was not from Him who is or from Him who was?" and "Hadst thou a son before bearing?" In cases too the answers were not given without exchange of blows.

Constantine, on becoming the Emperor of the East, was not slow to take notice of this conflagration. Its tone and temper was remote from anything with which he had had to deal with in the West, for the Donatist agitation had been a question of discipline and morals, but this was a dissension in the region of pure theology. We can understand how it appeared to him as the product of ill-employed leisure. He wrote a letter⁽²⁾ to Alexander and to Arius, in which he gave advice, as their sincere fellow-servant, that such questions as they debated ought not to be introduced into public assemblies or thoughtlessly confided to the ears of all men. He gave it as his opinion that few were capable of expounding accurately matters of so deep a nature, and that, even if they could, they would find few hearers able to follow their reasoning. He reminded them that the philosophers, though they differed from each other in their views, yet still kept the unity of their confederation, whereas they, who disagreed on what he called insignificant and vain contentions about words, had caused a widespread and scandalous dissension distracting the whole Church in these parts. He represented strongly his own sorrow and shame to hear of these things. He had been, he said, at Nicomedia and intended to come on to Alexandria, but when he heard intelligence of this affair, he reversed his purpose, lest he should see, with his own eyes, a condition of things, the very report of which had so inexpressibly grieved him. ^{He wrote:-} "No cause of

(1) So at least Athanasius tells us, (Discourse agt Arians, § 22) But we must remember that he was no unbiassed spectator of these events.

(2) Preserved Buseb. Vit. Cant. II. 64ff. + Socrat I. 6. (3.) Translation is Mr Gifford's ^{Based on}

difference^{at}, ~~he wrote~~, ^{it} has been started by you, bearing on any important precept contained in the Law, nor has any heresy been introduced by you, in connexion with the worship of God; but ye both hold one and the same judgment on these points, so that nothing exists to hinder association in communion. Moreover, while you thus contend pertinaciously with one another about matters of small or scarcely any importance, and especially with such virulence of feeling, it is unsuitable for you to have charge of so many people of God. I say these things, not as compelling you all to see exactly alike on the subject of this controversy, of small moment as it is; since the dignity of the general assembly may be preserved unaffected, and the same communion with all be retained, although there should exist among you, some dissimilarity of sentiment on unimportant matters. For we do not all desire the same thing in every respect, nor is there one unvarying nature, or standard of judgment in us. Therefore in regard to Divine Providence, let there be one faith, one sentiment, and one covenant of the Godhead; but respecting these minute investigations into which ye enter together with so much nicety, even if ye should not concur in one judgment, it becomes you to confine them to your own reflection, and to keep them in the recesses of the mind. Let then an ineffable and select bond of friendship, with faith in the truth, reverence for God and a devout observance of the law, remain unshaken among you. Resume the exercise of mutual friendship and grace Return to a state of reconciliation and give back, by so doing, to me also, tranquil days and nights free from care."

Of all fabled and actual "donatives" which the generous Emperor gave to the Christian Church, probably none might have been so rich or helpful as this letter. It had been at Nicomedia he

heard of the affair, but he does not seem to have taken a "Eusebian" view of the situation. His own practical, but not spiritually unenlightened, diagnosis of the situation, while missing the theological importance of the dispute, did not fall here below many a Churchman's. ⁽¹⁾ Hosius who carried this letter for him, had probably the same opinion of the question. The Emperor could scarcely in the interests of peace have done otherwise than convey his censures to both parties alike. He had always the power of putting in a veiled but yet visible manner his threats, as witness here his remarks upon the unfitness of such acrimonious debaters to have charge of congregations of the people.

As we have said the opinion of Hosius of Cordova may be taken as concurrent with that of the Emperor on the question. He was an ecclesiastic of high standing, a father of the Church and a natural president of its important councils, and so reveals what was the opinion generally of good Churchmen, even of a Western type of thought, upon this matter when first it came into prominence. A matter of the schools, so they judged, a matter of pure theology might be debated in select company, but was not a subject fitted for the minds of the unskilled populace. Good Christians might differ on matters so recondite as to be almost beyond human understanding, without breaking unity of faith or fellowship. Morality, discipline, differences in the service and worship of God were grave issues, but these academic questions should not be discussed with too great freedom, in view of the errors and blasphemies into which they might lead the unwary.

In his letter Constantine put forward plainly his reasons for attempting to bring to an end such a controversy in the Church. These were first the desire to bring to all nations uniformity of faith and secondly to keep peace among the citizens of the Empire.

(1) Euseb. (V.C. II. 64) says this Bp. carried the letter to Alexandria.

He referred to his successful treatment of the Donatist dispute and hoped that a readier adjustment might be made of these matters as they were of lesser moment. Thus probably it naturally came to his mind, when the storm showed no signs of abating, to use again the means which had been partially successful in the previous affair, namely a Council. This too might appeal in itself as an excellent instrument for the furtherance of general peace and religious uniformity. It may have been because he detected in the controversy a dangerous tendency to sedition (for it is said his statues were insulted by those incensed at his intervention), or, as is more likely, because of the more important political aim which he saw a world-Council might further, that he planned one then on a large scale. A local Council, or perhaps two such, had already dealt with the matter without result. Thus a conclave of bishops drawn from a very wide field was alone likely to come to a decision such as would quell the disorder. Moreover it had come to his attention, that the Eastern Churches, through preserving accord with Jewish systems of dating, kept Easter on a different day from that observed generally in the West. This ^{probably seemed} ~~provided a~~ ~~to the Emperor to provide a more dignified and important~~ ~~more dignified and, in the Emperor's eyes, sufficiently important~~ ~~occasion for the summons of a general Council and also~~ ~~subject, for the settlement of which, to call an assembly, and~~ justified his making it representative of all Christendom. ⁽¹⁾ He chose Nicaea in Bithynia as a fitting place for this gathering and invited the attendance of about three hundred bishops or their representatives, allowing them every facility and comfort for travel. He even asked Churchmen from parts beyond his own dominions, looking both to the religious and political advantage of this action. We have no reason for supposing that any other name than his own appeared in the letters convening the assembly, although it pleased the Sixth Oecumenical Council (of date 680 A.D.) to believe that

- (1) *Constantine's Letter to the Alex. Ch. speaks of Arianism as the cause of the Council. We have unfortunately no copy of his general summoning letter, and if the above is not genuine, (see argument in next chapter) we have nothing to suggest that he attached so much weight to the Alexandrian dispute as to think it worth the assembling of all bishops. His letter to all the Churches (Euseb. V.C. III. 17 ff.) shows that in his mind the Easter question was the real one before the Synod.*

Silvester, Bishop of Rome, was associated with him in this. It may be correct to say that he was carrying out "the suggestion of priests" ⁽¹⁾ but, though the ecclesiastics might recognise the value of such a Synod, the conception of it showed the grasp of affairs and deep wisdom of him who alone could make such a world-conference possible. Synods were, of course, an ecclesiastical practice even in early days, but, for the first time, since small gatherings at Jerusalem represented all believers, it was now possible to convene together representatives of the whole Church into one place. He who wished to bind the Empire into a unity through the Church, now sought to make the Church one with itself. Persecution and suppression, together with poverty and lack of facilities for travel on the part of men outlawed by their faith, had made each Christian community live largely in isolation from others. Differences had thus sprung up, such as this in the observance of Easter; and, when apparently so small a matter caused acrimony such as the Alexandrian affair had raised, he might easily be afraid that there might lie hidden roots of further dissension. Christians in fact needed some visible symbol of their unity, and he might expect that this Synod would supply one. Eusebius makes no mention of any Churchman being associated in summoning or advising the Council, and Constantine himself does not hesitate to take full credit.

It cannot be doubted that it was his ^{also} plan [^] that this Synod should give him an opportunity of impressing upon the Church his own position as God's chosen instrument to redeem Christianity from bondage and persecution and make it one. Other emperors had called themselves divine, but if he could have his whole people Christians, and bound together in a common faith and practice of fellowship, looking to him, as in no ordinary way, their deliverer and patron, while enemies and nations external to his rule, could

(1) So Rufinus finds it necessary to add to Eusebius' account of the matter, showing really the advance in ideas of ecclesiastical freedom from interference made between the time of Eusebius and his own.

also be of this religion of peace, and inclined to offer to one, set in so high a place over their common faith, some degree of loyalty and respect, the most ambitious dreams of any emperor since Augustus would be more than fulfilled. Thus he was present at the Council of bishops with condescension as one of their number, (unus ex vestrum numero sum)⁽¹⁾. It was moreover his obvious intention to dominate the Assembly. His favourite bishops, Eusebius of Caesarea and Hosius of Cordova, sat on his either side. The meeting-place was not a church or sacred building, but the hall of the imperial palace. The emperor who knew well that many of those assembled were simple people unused to sights of splendour and magnificence, had accordingly dressed gorgeously to impress them. We are told that his vesture was always glittering with jewels and that he never laid aside his diadem.⁽²⁾ On this occasion he has been described as "in appearance like a heavenly messenger clothed in raiment which shone with the rays of light and the brilliant splendour of gold and precious stones". A low chair of gold was set for him, but with a real respect for the ecclesiastics, and full consciousness of the value of allowing it to be unconcealed, he would not sit until one of them had invited him to do so, or speak until one of the bishops, Eusebius, had spoken.⁽³⁾ With Eusebius indeed his intimate friend and biographer, he may have arranged beforehand this impressive and edifying procedure, for the former noted how successful it all was to convey the conviction of the emperor's extraordinary greatness and goodness of heart. Even to his intimates, his voice seemed then more sonorous than usual. He took part graciously in the debate answering each cleric with courtesy, exhibiting his deep interest and his understanding of the subject discussed. He was now affable, a brother-bishop, as he would have them believe, and anon, earnestly and paternally grave,

(1) Letter to Church after Nicaea. Euseb. V.C. III. 14, (2) So says Aurel Victor X^{ist}. 14.
 (3) Eusebius (V.C. III. 12 ff.) is of course our authority for all this. He always saw the Emperor as he wished to be seen, and we may be sure no detail of this impressive pageantry was lost upon him or the simpler of the bishops.

Contentious

as he rebuked their ~~dissentious~~ spirit. All his manner must have seemed to say, "Here is a bishop like yourselves but more than a bishop. Here is the man by whom God chose to set on high the oppressed Church of His worshippers. Here is an Emperor worthy of all the honour ever paid to his rank, but one who, by his modesty, grace and Christian goodness, is worthier of a higher respect than ever yet could good Christian render to his predecessors. Here indeed is a bishop of bishops, fitted by every quality of rank, mind and spirit for the office." All this we may be certain was what he wished to be accepted as truth by these men, representative of the Church from all over the world. Nero when he died said, "What an artist is perishing?" Constantine was not merely acting for no doubt he thought himself divinely pointed to this very work, but never was his power of suggestion more skilfully used. It was perhaps his greatest effort to hold the reins of the fiery steeds which he commanded. It was in a way too his greatest defeat, for he made as we shall see a fatal error, from his point of view, on the theological question before the Council, and, in after-history it turned out that the Nicaean Synod itself and not its gorgeous dominant figure became the visible symbol of the unity of Christendom. The Council and its canons were to hold the Churchmen's loyalty, and in days to come give them courage to resist the imposition of the imperial will. Much as they might be impressed with the Emperor's splendour and affability, awed to silence as they might be by the situation, the emergent fact was not the authority of Emperors, but of Synods; and the West in particular took from Nicaea a weapon wherewith to combat the Constantians themselves.

CHAPTER V.

NICAEA.

ATTEMPTS TO UNIFY THE CHURCH.



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CHAPTER V.

NICAËA.

In approaching the events connected with the Council of Nicaea, we enter upon ^{one of} the most controversial periods of ~~this~~ history. Private opinion and violent partisanship obscure the narratives which have come down to us, ~~have~~ ^{have} given rise to forgeries, and have blinded the eyes of even genuine and sincere writers to the real issues then in dispute. It is, therefore, necessary to examine particularly the original sources.

These are first of all the formula of Nicaea and the canons of the Council. Concerning the formula there can be little dispute. The fact that it was given by Eusebius in the form elsewhere supported, and that he had need to make some defence of his adherence to it, is sufficient proof that the Nicene fathers legislated that the true faith was as follows:-

"We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God the only begotten of the Father, that is of the substance of the Father; God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, being of one substance (*ὁμοούσιος*) with the Father; by whom all things were made both which are in heaven and on earth, who for the sake of us men and our salvation descended, became incarnate, became man, suffered and rose again on the third day, He ascended into the heavens and will come to judge the living and the dead. We believe also in the Holy Spirit. But those who say that there was a time when he was not, or that he did not exist before he was begotten, or that he was made of nothing or assert that he is of other hypostasis or being (*οὐσία*) than the Father, or that the Son of God is created or mutable or susceptible of change, the catholic and apostolic Church of God anathematizes."

There is also general agreement as to the twenty genuine canons of the Council which chiefly refer to matters of discipline. Theodoret, Rufinus and Gelasius all speak of these as twenty in number, and the nine constitutions which the last author gives as addenda to the canons carry their own proofs of spuriousness. None of the ancients were acquainted with them and no modern writer of repute attempts to justify them. A letter of the Nicaean bishops to the brethren is recorded by Socrates.⁽¹⁾ It bears internal evidence of authenticity. The decisions on the question of the Melitians agree with the references to them in the writings of Athanasius, and the very brief reference to the Easter Controversy as well as the definite but not profuse condemnation of Arius read like genuine utterances upon subjects on which a forger would have enlarged expansively.

The letter states that the "most impious opinion" of Arius has been anathematized by all the Council with the exception of two bishops who had involved themselves in his errors, Theonas of Marmarica and Secundus of Ptolemais who were likewise excommunicated. It is obvious that had there been any others condemned at the Council, this official letter would have contained their names. Thus we may take it as assured that no more than three persons stood firmly by the Arian tenets at the discussion and received expulsion.

We have also four letters ~~from~~ ^{attributed to} Constantine connected with Nicaea.⁽²⁾ One of these ~~transmitted by Theodoret and~~ containing bitter mockery of Arius with punning upon his name may be set aside at once as a sheer forgery. The other three are all recorded by Socrates, but Eusebius only transmits to us one of these. ~~The~~ ^{this} letter having ^{double} confirmation is that addressed to the Churches generally, and contains probably the official pronouncement of the Council's decisions from the imperial point of view. If so, he

(1) Ch. Hist. I. 9.

(2) Ad Ecclesiam. Euseb. R.C. III. 17-20. Socrat. I. 9. Migne p. 501
Ad Ecclesias (Τὸς Πατριάρχαις καὶ Ἀρχιεπίσκοποις) Socrat. I. 9. Migne p. 505.
Ad Alexandrinam Eccles. Socrat. I. 9. Migne 507.
~~Ad Ariam. Theodoret. Migne 510.~~

apparently thought it unnecessary to mention the affair of Arius in an encyclical to all parts. The chief obstacle in the way of its acceptance is the manner in which the Jews are referred to, as a "hostile people", "parricides" and "perjurers". There are laws of Constantine of the date 330-331 A.D., which give to ^{Jewish officials} ~~the~~ the same ~~as had been given to Christian~~ privileges ~~as to~~ clergy. The period of the Synod, however, was one of decrees against all heretics ⁽¹⁾ (~~See V.C.III. 64-65, Migne pp. 319, 320~~) and therefore these later acts may signify the restoration of immunities withdrawn about this time. It is not impossible that it may have ~~seemed possible~~ ^{occurred} to Constantine to suppress Judaism in the same manner as he sought to suppress Sectaries. If so then the letter may be genuine, and if it ~~is~~ ^{might maybe} genuine then ~~The letter to the Alexandrians, ^{might maybe} is genuine also, and ~~the~~ has, however, weaker support, and its form suggests~~ ^{the reason why it alone referred to the Arian dispute would be} because Alexandria being the place of origin of the distension, ~~that city~~ ^{it only, in Constantine's opinion, required a letter informing} ~~Council's decision upon it~~ them of the ~~result~~. ^{It is, however, much more probable that an} ecclesiastic, surprised at the silence of the letter transmitted by Eusebius on the Arian question, wrote ^{another} ~~this~~ letter in Constantine's name. The Alexandrian letter echoes the other in the phrase, "I who am one of you and rejoice to be your fellow-servant". It shows also in all places a more scriptural tone than one would expect of the Emperor. Most suspicious of all is, however, the pronouncement on the validity of Councils which reveals an ecclesiastical opinion, paralleled only by that letter on the Donatist question which we found need to reject. Constantine is represented as saying, "That which has commended itself to the judgment of three hundred bishops cannot be other than the doctrine of God, seeing that the Holy Ghost dwelling in the minds of so many persons has effectually enlightened them respecting the divine will". Caution would therefore put this epistle among the very

(1) Euseb. V.C. III. 64-5. Migne 319, 320.

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doubtful writings of the Emperor.

There is also a general epistle "to the bishops and people", ordering the books of Arius to be destroyed, and threatening the penalty of death to anyone who should conceal his books. We have no evidence of such an order ever being carried out. Athanasius at a later date seemed to have works to quote from, unless indeed he remembered the "Thalia" which had been sung throughout the Thebaid. The letter itself however probably contains the explanation ^{of its origin,} when it says that it is fitting that Arius and the Arians should henceforth be called Porphyrians. The situation probably was that some writer, wishing to secure an extension of some condemnation of Porphyrian writings, forged this letter with its identification of the two types of ^{objectionable} ~~false~~ thought.

Thus then Constantine's letter to the general Church which Eusebius transmitted ^{is our only trustworthy document} ~~if, despite its references to the Jews,~~ ^{trustworthy evidence regarding} ~~we admit it, is our only evidence from his own hand of the Emperor's~~ ^{giving first-hand evidence as to the Emperor's} opinion upon the Nicæan decisions. The letter is almost wholly occupied with the Easter question, but the slight reference to the Arian controversy ^{is in the same spirit as that with which he} ~~bears out the attitude of him who previously~~ had criticised its protagonists for entering into too great detail in their theological explanations. He now naturally commends rather than condemns this exactness of discussion, but we can see the opinion he still entertained of the dispute as a discussion of points of ^{great} ~~of~~ minuteness. He says, "I perceived that this (i.e. one faith, sincere love, and uniform piety.) could not be firmly established unless all, or at least the greatest part, of the bishops could be convened in the same place, and every point of our most holy religion could be discussed by them in council. For this reason as many as possible were assembled and I myself as one of you was present; for I will not deny that I have a special joy in being your fellow-servant. All points were then

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minutely investigated until a decision acceptable to him who is the inspector of all things was published for the promotion of uniformity of judgment and practice; so that nothing might be henceforth left for dissension or controversy in matters of faith."

This we take it is our only reliable pronouncement from the pen of Constantine upon the Nicæan ~~decision~~ ^{formula of faith.} Eusebius is never tired of quoting his hero and would doubtless have given the other letters had he known them. If we suppose him to have been influenced by sympathy for Arian doctrines, Athanasius could not have had better material for his purpose in his contest with Constantius than such expressions of his revered father. Hilary too who actually mentioned the support Constantine gave to the Nicæan decision might have quoted his opinion of Arianism, had he had reliable documents to quote from upon the subject. Their silence suggests that there were none.

We have, however, further evidence in a letter of self-defence written by one of Arian sympathy ⁽¹⁾ explaining his consent to the finding of the Council. Such a document is beyond the skill of any forger. Eusebius therefore justifying himself for his vote to Nicæa certainly wrote this account of proceedings there: ⁽²⁾— He narrates that after he himself had stated a creed, "Our most pious emperor was the first to declare that these articles of faith were perfectly orthodox, and that he concurred exactly in their sentiments, exhorting all present to agree and subscribe to them in a unanimous confession. It was suggested, however, that the word *ὁμοούσιος* should be introduced, an expression which the Emperor himself explained as not indicating corporeal affections or properties, and consequently that the Son did not subsist from the father by division or partition, for an immaterial incorporeal nature cannot be subjected to bodily change, hence our understanding on such subjects must be expressed in divine

(1) Arius in a letter preserved in Theodoret (I. 5) counted Eusebius of Caesarea, Theodotius, Paulinus, Athanasius (of Anazarbus) Gregory, Actius among his supporters. (2) letter in Socrat. I. 8.

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and mysterious language. Such was the philosophical view of the subject taken by our most wise and pious emperor."

In his ~~history~~ ^{Life of Constantine,⁹⁷} moreover, Eusebius assigns a similar importance to the part taken by Constantine in the discussion. There he says:-

"A variety of topics having been introduced by each party and much controversy excited from the very commencement, the Emperor listened to all with patient attention, deliberately and impartially considering whatever was advanced. He in part supported the statements which were made on both sides, and gradually softened the asperity of those who contentiously opposed each other, conciliating each by his mildness and affability. Addressing them in the Greek language, with which he was well acquainted, in a manner at once interesting and persuasive, he wrought conviction on the minds of some and prevailed on others by entreaty. Those who spoke well he applauded, and ^{he} incited all to unanimity; until at length he succeeded in bringing them into similarity of judgment, and conformity of opinion on all the controverted points: so that there was not only unity in confession of faith, but also a general agreement as to the time for the salutary feast of Easter. Moreover the doctrines, which had thus the common consent, were confirmed by the signature of each individual."

We may question, however, the fidelity to fact of Eusebius. It seems at first sight unlikely that the Emperor, who thought the matter of dispute so transcendental, would trouble to give any philosophical explanation of the word, *ὁμοούσιος*, and that he especially, who above all desired peace and later showed favour to Arian bishops, would not be guilty of fixing the choice of the Council upon that fatal word. Have we not, however, just here the result of that haste, or indifference, which would not weigh the difficulties of the question. We have to face the

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fact that Eusebius accepted the word he disliked, and he makes his reason plain. He was influenced by the Emperor and by that interpretation of the Emperor's which seemed to remove its difficulties. Can we explain the unanimous acceptance of the word by a representative Council at this stage on any other terms, but that the Eastern bishops generally were similarly supine to the imperial judgment?² Only three persons were excommunicated, and the settled opinion of Arius was that they were so treated for saying what all the East believed.

It is not the purpose of this work to discuss the theological merits of this question, but some appraisement is necessary for the sake of marking the divisions between the various parties. The party of Alexander, to be known ever after as Athanasian from the name of his learned deacon, ~~Athenasius~~ had not reached that position which has now the weight of ecclesiastical orthodoxy. Athanasius in 325 A.D., would have answered Question

^{Scottish} 6 of our ^{for example} Shorter Catechism, so:- *τρία πρόσωπα ἐν τῇ θεϊότητι ἔστιν; οὗτοι δὲ οἱ τρεῖς εἰσι θεὸς, ὁμοούσιος μὲν ἴσοι δὲ κατὰ φύσιν καὶ κατὰ δοξάν.*

Basil the Great effected a change of terms ~~and~~ about 370 A.D., and Athanasius would have ^{then} substituted for the above *πρόσωπα*, the word

ὑπόστασις. Basil taught that *ὑπόστασις* best designated personal existence, and that *οὐσία* marked *τὸ κοινόν*, ^{while} *ὑπόστασις* marked *τὸ καθ' ἑκάστον*

There is little doubt then that the Nicaean formula, wherein it anathematized all who assert that ^{Christ} ~~he~~ is of other *ὑπόστασις*

~~than the Father~~, was not supported by later authoritative pronouncements on the faith. A criticism of the Nicaean formula⁽¹⁾ from the standpoint of ^{strict} ~~true~~ ecclesiastical orthodoxy is that they confused *ὑπόστασις* and *οὐσία* and so denying to the Son a separate *ὑπόστασις* from the Father, actually did favour Sabellianism, (i.e. that Father, Son, and

(1) This ~~is~~ may be said to be the accepted opinion of modern historians of dogma e.g. Harnack. Bethune Baker (*Texts & Studies* Cambridge 1901) attempts to disprove this but is not convincing. Our point is that if Basil was right, Nicaea was strictly speaking wrong, thus the anti-Homoeousians of the early period had justification and therefore must have had numbers.

See
aspect.

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Spirit are merely three aspects *or πρόσωπα* of one God) even as their opponents contested. The Latin Fathers were operating in their minds with words of different meaning. "Consubstantialis" was a word agreeable to them, as Tertullian, the only Western theologian who handled such themes with accuracy, had given it currency. Operating with the terms persona and substantia he was able to express satisfactorily the Trinitarian facts. The very simplicity of language was a help, however, for whenever Tertullianism was translated into Greek, as in the writings of Dionysius of Alexandria, difficulty arose at once. Athanasius is our authority for this theologian's opinions, and despite his care to put the best complexion on the case, we find him asserting

τρεις ὑποστάσεις, and he has difficulty with the word *ὁμοούσιος* recognising that the Son cannot be *ξενός τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς*, but

~~indeed but~~ using *ὁμοφυΐς* (one in nature) as if equivalent. Until indeed *ὑπόστασις* was recognised to be different from *οὐσία* the latter word remained a difficulty to the Greek

clerics. While polytheism moreover, was the pagan opposition in the West, in the East it was the pantheistic "night, wherein all cows are black." *ὁμοούσιος* seemed to mean "the same being" i.e. entirely one. Basil the Great would have said the same

ὑπόστασις actually did mean ^{*absorption in one state of being.*} Thus we must note that the orthodox themselves were not at one with regard to this word. Many who were called Semi-Arians at this period e.g. Basil of Ancyra and the authors of the Macrostich etc., were called so entirely wrongly. They were, in fact, orthodox in faith with a objection to the word *ὁμοούσιος*, which was perfectly legitimate until it was separated from *ὑπόστασις* in meaning. The word ^{*it is certain, or nearly so,*} moreover had been already condemned by Eastern Councils, as an expression of Sabellianism.

- (1) Synod of Antioch 294 A.D. So Synod of Ancyra maintained 358 A.D. and Athan. does not deny the possibility De Synodis Armen. c. 43.

a theologian who, though orthodox from
Arius was not however ~~an orthodox theologian with a~~
~~the ecclesiastical point of view, had a bias against a mere word.~~
~~bias against the mere word,~~ No more was he a
Porphyrian, or believer merely in Christ's humanity. Operating
with the idea of God the Father as the Unconditioned Absolute,
he had reached by sheer logic the only position possible, ^{perhaps, from such premises,} that the
Son was a creation outside of God, but before all worlds or even
conceivable time. His reasoning as shown in the previous pages
was ^{probably} the only one which rationalising could reach, when the premise
of the Father being the Eternal Unconditioned One was accepted.
Clement of Alexandria and Origen had popularised this sort of
approach between theology and the philosophy of the Logos. Clement
spoke of God in terms that put Him beyond the range of understand-
ing saying, "None of these names inform as of God but collectively
and taken all together they point to his almighty power", ^{and} He is
"without emotion, without wrath, without desire". ^{Now such} ~~Such~~ is the
Philonic God, a conception ^{almost} similar to the Hindu "Brahma". To
relate such a God to the world, philosophy required a metaphysical
medium and found it in the "Logos" the "Wisdom" or "Word" of God, that
transcendental entity which expressed the direction of the Godhead
towards creation. It was fascinating to identify this Logos with
Jesus Christ, whose divine preexistence was a universally accepted
doctrine. It might be said that the manifest error lay in the
fact that this God remote from earth, without name, emotion or
desire, could not be identified with the "Abba, Father" of Jesus
Christ, and that Christian theology ^{needed} ~~needed~~ a conception which can
allow, as Hegel pointed out, of a process within itself, and not of
an Unchanging Absolute. ^{or an equivalent} Hegelianism was not, however, then
forthcoming, and theology and philosophy were thus at an impasse.
It is very certain therefore that most Christians who operated
with philosophical ideas would be in the very position of Arius.
Gregory of Nazianza relates to us with what difficulty he persuaded

his father, a cleric of earnest Christian life, as to the error of this opinion. We may be certain that many, ^{if not all} ~~every~~ ^{trained} School-~~clerics~~ clerics of the East were Arians when they attempted to reconcile their metaphysical training with their Christian faith. ^{(1) Many} ~~They~~ would recognise ^{perhaps} ~~however~~ that there was no moral value at the back of such assertions and that there was no scriptural warrant for them. The word Homöousios however shared the same disadvantages and so equally with those moved by anti-Sabellian fears, which they would also entertain, we should have expected that their not inconsiderable vote would have been against that word.

(2) Such was the strength of the opposition to the Nicaean formula, and it cannot but astonish us, especially in view of the Eastern clerics' persistent hostility to it in the after-^{-years,} ~~that~~ that it was passed with only three dissentients. The strength of the Homöousian party was that in Latin it was completely satisfactory to the West, and that the Orthodox were vehement for it, thinking they were combating Porphyrianism of a vicious type. Academic Arianism, ~~however,~~ might be only a conceit of logic, but to many Homöousios was thought ~~not without reason~~ to be Sabellian, and why were these not equally eager for ^a definition which might preserve Christ's true position? We cannot but feel ^{therefore} ~~that~~ that the Easterns' silence requires for explanation an extra-ecclesiastical reason.

Consideration of the long agitation which followed and of the stubbornness of the East, and of its unanimity in its stubbornness on the Homöousian question, necessitates the belief that in the Council they were over-awed and mesmerised into unity on the formula. It is usually represented with curious consistency by historians that Athanasius, then a mere deacon, was by his eloquence and keen powers of reasoning, the cause of the triumph of his opinions; but such gifts would have caused conviction, and in view of after-history, it is plain that the Eastern Church was

- (1) This was certainly the opinion of Arius, who said those who accepted the contrary view were "unlearned". (See his letter, Theodoret I. 5.)
- (2) It will be noted that we have transgressed into these theological regions purely in order to show the strength of opposition to the Homöousios formula, and to establish our point that external influence ^{must have been} ~~was there~~ brought to bear. The evidence of Eusebius alone could not establish this important point.

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not convinced, but rendered mute. Where three hundred bishops assemble and sign a document which does not contain the opinions of much more than half of them, and where there was present then a new feature in their deliberations, namely an Emperor of Rome in all regal pomp and dignity, by mere guess-work one would conclude that he had vitiated the debate and overawed the judgment.

Supposition is however unnecessary for we have the express words of an eye-witness, ^{with sympathies for Arianism} ~~an Arianiser~~ as we can read between the lines in his own letter, and to him, and as he thought to many others, the final word was:- "Such was the view of our most pious Emperor." As for the hated word, "so did the Emperor himself explain it".

Thus we have still further evidence of Constantine's domination over Church-affairs. We know that he cared little for the theological issue. He wanted peace. He judged that the Nicaean formula would secure it. He made in fact a signal error, but we need not be surprised. We may know now ^{into} what the Arian controversy might evolve. ~~into~~ He did not know and could not guess.

Insignificant trifling in purely speculative questions, he had judged ^{this dispute} ~~it~~ at its commencement. In his account of the doings of the Council he thought it unworthy of a detailed explanation. He misread the situation, ignoring the ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ intensity of the emotion which the relation of Christ to God created for the Church, for the very reason that Christianity was to him a discipline, a government, or a mode of rule, rather than a faith. The Easterns were tongue-tied by native quiescence or by gratitude. He was a Western himself, without appreciation of the subtleties of Greek philosophical language. He thought the whole matter of little importance, and searched for the formula which would secure unanimity, ~~and found it~~. He found it as he supposed, when he realised that the Easterns could be awed, but ^{that} ~~this~~ only would satisfy the Westerns. So he decided to his own undoing and in point of fact enthroned Nicaea

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where he wished to enthrone himself. We are told by one writer that he was so far out in his calculations that he expected even Arius to ^{conform.} ~~accept the formula~~, ^{That} ~~which~~ he had selected ^{as} ~~one~~ ^{a formula of} reconciliation ^{one} ~~and~~ which was destined yet to cut the Church asunder as by a sword, ^{is merely} ~~an~~ example of the ~~very type of errors~~ into which a layman ^{may} ~~might~~ easily fall in these speculative regions of theology. ~~His writings show that he did not think the formula important enough to mention in detail.~~

^{Constantine} What ~~he~~ ^{did} think important, ^{however} was that ~~the~~ ^{whole} the Church should hold Easter on the same day. On this subject he expands with enthusiasm in his letter:- "Do exert your usual sagacity and reflect how evil it would be, and how improper, that days devoted by some to fasting should be spent by others in convivial feasting, and yet this, in fact, is the case. That this impropriety should be rectified, and that all these diversities of commemoration should be resolved into one form, is the will of Divine Providence, as I am convinced you will admit". It had seemed to him previously a valuable thing that even his pagan and Christian subjects should hold their weekly festival upon one day. So we may be perfectly certain that a political reason, and probably a very sound one, entered into his anxiety with regard to this yearly commemoration. The Eastern date was, however, one of very ancient usage. Even Western clerics might be aware that they could not ^{at once} ~~abolish~~ ^{the older} ~~this old~~ method of reckoning. Uniformity was desirable, they would agree, but, with a promise from their brethern, that this would be sought as far as possible in the future, they would be content, and indeed abundantly gratified. Such would be the reasons for their very brief report upon this subject, but Constantine was determined upon the point and, as we see, used the strongest forces of persuasion. The Eastern bishops when to the news of the reception of the word, "Homocousios" was

(1) better to Church after Nicæa loc. cit supra.

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added the decision upon the change of the date of Easter, might well begin to speculate as to the difference between "Liberation" and "Conquest".

~~There was~~ Another Alexandrian difficulty to be dealt with ^{was} the dissensions of the Meletians. As to the origin of this sect we have divided reports. Three sources explain their rise. One, Epiphanius, gives Meletius credit for a sane degree of strictness on the question of the Lapsed which did not win acceptance with the former Bishop ~~Peter~~ of Alexandria. Another, ^{Peter,} Athanasius, attributes Meletius' discontent to ^{the fact that he was deposed} ~~his deposition~~ by Peter for lapsing himself. Letters published by Maffei reveal that the initial trouble was certain ordinations which Meletius carried out in the absence of Peter. It is certain that the clerics of Nicaea took no sympathetic attitude towards the party or its leader. They expressly pronounced in their encyclical their opinion that these people deserved no consideration whatever. They dealt with them leniently, however, and allowed Meletius to retain his bare title but ordered him to refrain from all duty. His clerics were to be reordained and used for the service of the Church as opportunity offered. If Constantine suggested these mild councils, he again wrought defeat to his plans of peace, but on this point we have no information.

There were, however, indications made at Nicaea that the Church had some life and spirit of its own, and, even while outwardly quiescent, was not a mere mechanism for recording the Emperor's opinions. The formula while not that of the unanimous Church was still not that of Constantine. Unknown to him a very definite pronouncement had been made, which was already a decided step away from his ideal of a vague faith acceptable in all quarters. It was his desire that the clerics should not busy themselves with these discussions. They had actually opened up one of unequalled

(1) better discov. & published by Maffei, Epiphanius 68 + Athan. Apol. agt. Arian. 59.
(Nicene Patrol. C. 508, 509)

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size, and gone forward on the lines of giving more and more accurate definitions upon such subjects. We may have sympathies with the Imperial attitude, but it is plain that it was the Church's own will to develop ^{her} ~~its~~ creed and speculative theology. That ^{she} ~~it~~ did so under his very eyes ^{to} ~~is~~ proof of ^{her} ~~its~~ own elan vital. We note that he who condemned this meticulousness came afterwards to praise it, and ^{we} ~~have~~ evidence that the passivity of this Church can be exaggerated. Not only so but they obviously remained ^{more or less} ~~impenitently~~ indifferent to his important political considerations about Easter. If he could not be made a theologian, no more could they be converted to enthusiasm upon this point of social interest. The most determinative movement of the Nicaean Council towards safeguarding the liberties of the Church was, however, in certain decrees as to their internal constitution. These too probably won imperial favour, but they were actually in the issue to establish her against State-encroachment.

Constantine had divided the Empire into four prefectures, The East, Illyria, Italy and Gaul; these prefectures into vicariates and the vicariates into provinces. The Church followed this movement whereby civil autocracy had sought to make itself safe. We have already noted in connection with the canons of the Councils of Ancyra and Neo-Caesarea, the distinction between country and town bishops. Metropolitan Sees had also been established; but certain canons of Nicaea reveal to us the further development of this movement of building up the hierarchy. In Canon 6 of the Acts of Nicaea there is a direction that the Bishop of Alexandria should have jurisdiction over the provinces of Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis. It mentions that the Bishop of Rome had a similarly ^{confirmed} ~~wide~~ jurisdiction over several provinces. Authority is ~~affirmed~~ also to the Church of Antioch and other unnamed eparchies, and the following Canon (7) giving excuse of old tradition, accords to the

Bishop of Aelia (Jerusalem) precedence of rank, such as is consistent with the dignity of the Metropolitan (i.e. Caesarea). These movements would indicate that the dignity which Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome had ever held as Apostolic Sees was now in some degree confirmed, in some degree modified, according to the political divisions of the Empire. (1) Thus, in Canon 4, the Bishop is ordered to be appointed by all the eparchy, and confirmed in each eparchy by the Metropolitan. This law though mainly occupied with the manner of appointment may definitely relate the ecclesiastical to the political provinces. The rank given as already established defacto, to the Bishop of Alexandria is a position over Metropolitans which would work out in an analogy to the State-Offices thus:-

Praesides (lowest governors of Provinces) = Bishops, over eparchies;

Vicarii of Proconsulates = Metropolitans; Praefectors over the four great divisions of the Empire = Patriarchs or Popes, of which we have at Nicea two types only, who had under their rule more than

one Proconsulate, namely, the Bishop of Rome, and the Bishop of Alexandria. Here was a movement towards ^{exalting} high ecclesiastical rulers, similar to high officers of State, ^{who might prove prone} ~~likely~~ to breed

dissension with neighbouring metropolitans, and also to interfere with the will even of the Caesars and of the Augustus himself.

Be it noted further that these officers were elected in an orderly way quite independent of the emperor's choice. Means were taken

at this Synod to secure that these appointments should have the support of the inferior clergy in every case, ^{and regulations (2)} ~~Regulations~~ were made for ~~bidding~~ the aspirants' hasty progress through Catechumenate,

Baptism, and ^{Thus,} ~~Priesthood~~ ~~so that~~ every cleric had a constitutional authority and a democratic support for his office, such as no emperor or imperial official possessed. ^{were, therefore,} ~~There~~ If there ~~was~~ to be any contest between Church and State, the former had the better

(1) Cf. Tractatus Synodicalium p. 90.
(2) Canon 2.

Neither was it such as equipment. ~~It~~[^] could ~~it~~ be used as a mere piece of mechanism for any Emperor's purpose. If, for example, there ~~were~~^{were} ever any effort on the part of an extra-ecclesiastical authority to seek to intrude a bishop into a see, whatever force might be at its back, it would never have the support of right, or the consent of those who looked to such a great Council as this as authoritative. They were ~~then~~ merely asserting the rights which had been inherent in their association from the beginning, but so thoroughly were they guarded that the bishop had control of vacancies among the presbyters, the metropolitan controlled vacant bishoprics, and metropolitans had as mentors the patriarch or ~~brother~~^{their}-metropolitans. For a valid election the congregations themselves must also be present. Later teaching might arise to urge that the Civil Magistrate represented the people ^{in this respect,} ~~^~~ but the need of ecclesiastical support would ever stand in the way of any attempt to confuse spiritual headship of a flock with a mere civil appointment.

Further in addition to the question of patronage in appointment, that of ~~the~~^{the} Headship of the Church was certain to arise, now that the State government had allied itself with the religious order. Constantine, who was not even a catechumen, and saw too well the danger for his personal power of putting himself in the lowest ranks of the believers, dared to call himself one of the bishops. We believe that his whole aim at Nicaea was to slip into the place of Bishop of the Bishops, the Head of the Church as he was Pontifex Maximus of the pagan religion. Rome, however, had for long, it is apparent, held an ecclesiastical place consistent with its civil importance in the Western world. Over what regions the bishop of Rome acted as superior the Council forebore to say. Perhaps the definition of the limits might have caused some discussion ^{with} ~~at~~ Milan and Carthage. Use and wont was not interfered with, but what of headship the bishops of certain

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great centres such as Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria had, as it were, naturally acquired, was now confirmed to them. The amazing story came to be credited in mediaeval times that Constantine made a "donative" or gift of his Western dominions to the Bishop of Rome. The idea would have astounded him, but he might have a certain uneasiness to see, shaping itself, a movement which was raising individual ecclesiastics to positions of such extraordinary prominence. He knew well the power of the Church and of the Churchmen. In future he might find his enemies, not as his predecessors had done, among prefects and army commanders, but among these influential bishops. It had been made plain too, as we have pointed out, that their interests and aims were, rather obviously, not altogether those of the Imperial Augustus.

A kind of post-scriptive work of the Nicaean Council was the attempt to reconcile the now nearly a century-old breach with the Novatians. So far as we can see Constantine attempted this task himself, but he may have had the good will of the clergy. This sect of Katharoi, as they preferred to be called, had a higher prestige than separatists usually won for themselves. They were very numerous and had a high moral reputation. They were further aided by having a bishopric at Rome. It was, however, the Constantinople representative, Acesius, whom the Emperor approached.

The Novatians represented, like the Donatists, the strict attitude towards the lapsed. Founding on the words of our Lord, "~~Whoever shall deny me before men,~~ ^{Whoever shall deny me before men,} ~~he will I also deny~~ ^{him will I also deny}", they refused to the Bishops and the Church generally any right to receive into membership those who had sacrificed to idols after their baptism. The ^{founder} ~~leader~~, Novatian, ^{had been} ~~was~~ a Roman cleric of the greatest distinction and ability. He had always held a severe tone against the lapsed, holding that they should never receive Church benefits

except in the hour of threatening death. After the Decian persecution he apparently took a still firmer attitude, and, according to opponents at least, would have denied them even that consolation. Cyprian was a vigorous opponent and he sums up in a sentence the position to which Novatian assigned ~~the~~ these recreant Christians.⁽¹⁾ "To weep and pour forth tears, and groan day and night, and for the remission and purgation of faults work greatly and often, but after all this to die out ~~with~~ ^{its} the Church." The historian Socrates, who is rather more favourable to this sect than most of our authorities makes it plain, however, that Novatian rigorism was entirely ecclesiastical and that ~~his~~ ^{its} exhortations to repentance were expressed not without conviction that God would grant ~~them~~ forgiveness.⁽²⁾ The same writer makes us see also the widespread hold which this sect had upon Christendom, for many felt what might at first seem a merciless course, to be a necessity for the promotion of discipline and pure devotion. Novatian was raised to the episcopacy by certain supporters, and thereafter his sect existed side by side with the Catholic body in almost every city of importance through the Empire, so that in Constantine's day, it had by no means the character of a sporadic or local outburst, but represented a second Church alongside of the Catholic body. Its members were characterised too by devotion and morality, and also by unquestioned orthodoxy in theological belief. So widespread a movement requires the deep consideration of the historian. ~~We have evidence also if Pope Innocent is to be accepted that the Church in Constantine's day made an important relaxation of its discipline.~~ *There is also a sentence in a letter of Pope Innocent which may contain important information with regard to this sect.* Writing to the Bishop of Tolouse he says that formerly the Church allowed the penitence of converts, but refused the Communion because the times of persecution were frequent, but after our Lord restored peace to his Churches, it seemed good to give communion lest we

(1) Epist. Cyprian. 31. 52. (2) Socrat. Hist. IV. 28.

should follow the cruelty and harshness of the Novatian heresy which denies pardon". These words can hardly be taken as ^{certain} evidence that Novatianism was distinguished from Catholicism in Constantinian times chiefly by its adherence to what was actually the practice of the Catholic body itself in older times. The words can bear that construction, however, and our information as to their practice is so slight that we must consider this possibility. Socrates says that they put adulterers and these guilty of heinous sins in the same category as the apostates, which would rather favour this idea, since we would not expect innovation in so conservative a body, and their treatment of the adultrous was in Cyprian's time life-long penitence with communion granted in extremis. This writer vouches, at least, for the high esteem in which they were ever held by the Catholic clergy of Constantinople and, we can see, by himself. We can imagine that if the reign of Constantine brought relaxation of morals within the Church, ^{the stricter} ~~their~~ fraternity would be the more eagerly sought by many. Mild treatment of heinous sin was probably not without instances of abuse. There was apparently appointed in many parts of the Catholic Church a special clerical ministrant for penitents and special places of worship to keep them in isolation from the rest of the faithful. (2) Socrates again is evidence that this practice took rise from the time of Novatian separation. The Novatians had no such officer, and according to Socrates, would never hear of such an establishment. ^{It is and similar} ~~Thus the~~ changes effected by the Constantinian peace might be shocking to many and cause them to betake themselves in large numbers to the ^{rival} ~~stricter~~ fellowship. The Novatians probably sought to gather together a select society ^{cleansed} ~~purified~~ by baptism and unstained by any such fault as might defile the whole man, ^{and while teaching} ~~taught~~ the value of penitence for all and ^{holding} ~~held~~ out God's

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forgiveness as possible to all, (1) ~~but~~ viewed ~~all~~ this as ^{as a holy} irrelevant to the question of establishing a Church, ~~a purified~~ body on earth, ^{fit} ~~either~~ to greet the Lord at his coming, ^{and} ~~or~~ to perform His works in the world. They wished no fellowship with the laxer group of men who could by gross sins stain the Name which they professed. They sought what the spirit of Catholicism could not secure a select and pure society. Theirs was indeed the typical ambition of the puritan spirit, or, to give it the coarser name of modern terminology, of the Sect-type of Christianity governed probably by hopes of a speedy Advent. The Constantinian peace caused the Catholic body to relax its discipline, to develop a rather wooden penitential system, to create new officers for this system and ^{to} delegate in this connection functions to presbyters, which had been jealously guarded even by Cyprian, the arch-opponent of Novatianism, for the bishops. The Novatians passed into it without change, or with a tightening of the bands. It had monasticism's idealism, its fellowship of like minded people, its warm brotherhood, but not its seclusion from home and the occupations of daily work. We can see how Novatianism was strengthened. It viewed with misgiving the universalism of the Church, its compromises and its revision of its ^{customs,} ~~orders~~ in view of its fight with the world. It was (2) no mere lopsided misgrowth, but an expression of something at the heart of Christianity which the ^{Catholic body,} ~~Church~~ it felt, was now only imperfectly expressing. Thus the secularising influence ^{instead of} ~~which~~ ^{weakening it,} ~~weakened the Church~~ gave to it ~~instead~~ a more compact conception of itself. ^{when} ~~The Catholic body, however,~~ woke to its great political and social duties ~~which~~ Novatianism ~~neglected, for it~~ rather withdrew its inner soul as from a defiling touch. Of the various reactions of Christianity to the Constantinian peace, it has a not less interesting history because a silent one. It remained, so far as we can see simply untouched and intangible. Imperial favour could never make it 'popular'. Oppression could not

(1) Symbolising this, perhaps, by administering communion in extremis to those who had showed real penitence in their lives. We must remember that the refusal of communion in extremis to some whom their strict principles might think unfit would easily lead opponents to speak as if this was an invariable custom with them.

(2) Cf. Troeltsch on Sect type of Christianity.

make it yield. It had no gap in its armour whereby the weapons of secularisation could enter in to pierce it.

When Constantine then interviewed the Novatian bishop he laid before him the decision of Nicaea, and urged him to share communion with a faith and practice wherewith he had no quarrel. ^{The Bishop} ~~He~~ stated simply the traditional position of his sect. "Place a ladder, Acesius and climb to Heaven by yourself", ~~said~~ ^{replied} the Emperor. He, was, however, answered. Novatianism would climb to Heaven by its own ladder, ^{one} a narrow one indeed and [^] with no room upon it for the bulk of mankind, but one in which no State-system would ever place a rung. Let it be noted then that Constantine's policy for all its apparent success at Nicaea was still faced by these two formidable reactions, the further careful building-up and development of an organised and self-disciplined Church more surely growing into an independent autonomous body, and the intractibility of independent bodies of Christians strongly retentive of their isolation from every secularising influence.

CHAPTER VI.

~~CHURCH POLICY ON THE POLICY OF CONSTANTINE.~~

FURTHER EFFORTS FOR IMPERIAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL
UNITY.



CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER EFFORTS FOR IMPERIAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL UNITY.

After the dissolution of the Council the Emperor's twentieth anniversary was celebrated in a gorgeous manner which lived long in the remembrance of his admirers.⁽¹⁾ The bishops, in particular, received a sumptuous entertainment and returned to their charges, loaded with gifts, and with solemn warnings against dissensions ringing in their ears. If Constantine then returned to the western parts of his dominions,⁽²⁾ he ~~he~~^{soon} began to find ~~however~~ that pagan Rome had ceased to be his spiritual home. His motives have been obscured by mis-representation, but he might easily feel that a Christian Empire might more effectively have its capital in the midst of the strongholds of the faith. A glance at Harnack's⁽³⁾ coloured map showing the spread of Christianity to the year 325 A.D. is sufficient explanation^{from this point of view,} of his preference for a metropolis at Byzantium. Asia Minor and Thrace show there in the dark red, which denotes a population fifty per cent Christian, whereas the Western world is lightly coloured, except in Africa, Alexandria and Spain which were inconvenient centres for Imperial government. Rome itself had a strong Christian element among its inhabitants, but Italy as a whole was poorly evangelised, and the heathen populace of the Eternal City were its more influential members. Its markets and public streets, and its social customs everywhere, breathed the pagan spirit. Constantine would soon discover how objectionable and difficult this made his situation as a professed patron of the Christian faith. He could not easily keep his prestige among the

(1.) For a description of this event see Euseb. V.C. III. 14-16. (2) Sozomen I. 25.

(3) Mission & Expansion of Christianity.

bishops if he took part in heathen festivals. When, however, he refused to join in the procession of the Equestrian Order in Rome⁽¹⁾ (326) and showed contempt of its sham pomp, he offended deeply the Senate and people. His position was a difficult one. He could not resign such a position as that of Pontifex Maximus without laying his hold upon his heathen subjects open to considerable loss, and yet in every place where he might attempt to fulfil its duties, his actions would be noted with disappointment by the Christians. It would be specially disagreeable to carry them out under the eye of so influential an ecclesiastic as the bishop of Rome. He had maintained a dual Establishment, while Emperor of the West, but then he had not so definitely cast in his lot with the Christians. In his bid for the Eastern power he had come forward as their God-appointed champion. A patronizer of the faith, who maintained a little his aloofness from its absolute acceptance, might without offence do what a Christian champion, nay would-be Emperor-Bishop, could not countenance. On the other hand the head of the old Roman religion could not be in Rome without fulfilling some, at least, of his priestly functions. These reasons no doubt ^{helped to convince} ~~convinced~~ Constantine that a new Rome built in the midst of the strongest Christian influences would be the wisest solution of his difficulties. Byzantium, on the straits of Propontis, ~~may~~ ^{have} appeared an altogether admirable location since, with a Christian surrounding, it occupied ^{above all} ~~also~~ a central position adapted for the vast administration now under his control. (2)

A new Rome was not likely to appeal to the inhabitants of the older city. This was the time when Constantine lost popularity with the Romans. Heathen historians, such as Zosimus, attribute the steps which he now took as due to the ^{hitherto} ~~the~~ concealed malice of his nature. They emphasise the connection between his resolution to (3)

(1) Zosimus tells us that he did so, a valuable indication of his distinct discountenancing of heathenism from a heathen historian. (II. 10) (2) Zosimus ~~XXIX. 1~~ gives other reasons, which are plainly prejudiced invention. (3) loc. cit.

build a new capital and the death of his son, Crispus. It must be recognised that considerable confusion has entered into the reports of this event. The narrative is that Fausta, Constantine's wife, tempted her step-son, and, ⁽¹⁾ on ^{his} resisting her advances, she accused him falsely to the Emperor, who put him to death; but that Helena, his mother, gave the Emperor no rest from her upbraidings until he had put Fausta to death also, which he did by enclosure in an overheated bath-chamber. ^{My} To this is added the story that seeking to be cleansed from this double guilt, he could find none but the Christians willing to receive him, and so embraced their faith. Rome, it is alleged, became hateful to him thereafter because of these shameful memories, and so he built a new city in the East.

One plain point is established from these stories, as we have noted, that only at this date did Constantine appear to his heathen subjects as an avowed Christian. Another certainty is that at or about the same time he put to death Crispus, his son.

The other details of the story are in some points reminiscent of the legend of Hippolytus and Phaedra. Crispus was even to Constantine's strongest admirers "a pious son resembling in all ⁽²⁾ things his father. ⁽⁴⁾ Fausta was at all events praised by Julian for "nobility of character and purity of life"; and, although his panegyrics contain fulsome flattery, he does not go out of his way, as a rule, to lay bare their general exaggeration by manifest falsehood. Again, as we know, Constantine had deeper reasons, and such as appealed to him before the incident of Crispus, for a decided Christian attitude, and such an attitude, ^{coupled with administrative considerations,} ~~was~~ [^] motive enough ~~in itself~~ for the foundation of the new city. We have here, therefore, a tale full of contradictions, and it is to be noted the later

(1) loc. cit. (2) So Eusebius describes him. (3) Panegyric ad Constantianum 9.

(1)
 historians tell the most. . Gibbon has pointed out further that a eulogy of the succeeding reign speaks of Fausta as alive. This is a monody upon the death of the younger Constantine and contains the words, "Thy motherhow did she bear the news of thy death." It is suggested by some that this work was a mere school-exercise and carries no authority, but ~~if it were so~~ it would be inexplicable that an author of any late date should not know the current story about Fausta. We see, also that Zosimus had difficulty in reconciling himself to the idea that the Fausta executed for adulterous designs was the Empress of that name. Consequently it is a fairly safe conclusion that the addition of Fausta's name to the roll of those put to death by Constantine is due to the working of a Phaedra legend. The appearance of Helena in it may be due to the fact that the wife of Crispus was a Helena. We have at least an edict of 322 A.D.⁽²⁾ granting indulgence to all criminals "propter Crispi et Helenae partum" which may have been in celebration of the birth of a grand-child to the Emperor. It may have been ^{that} this Helena ^{also} ~~was~~ was put to death causing a confusion in the narrator's minds which resulted in the current legend. Victor Aurelius⁽³⁾ merely records that Crispus was executed "for uncertain reasons," and Eusebius is entirely silent. The later historians have suspiciously most to tell. The execution certainly created public indignation.⁽⁴⁾ It was accompanied by similar treatment of Licinianus, nephew of Constantine and son of Licinius. Crispus may have been tempted to aspire to the purple, or the jealousy of the children of Fausta may have caused family dissension. We have at all events a vivid glimpse here into the inner character of Constantine. We see the strong will ^{to} power which lay at the back of all his many activities, benevolent and otherwise. The deed was, of course, of a kind almost traditional to his office, but it

(1) The quotation is from Pansyria to ^{after death of} Constantine II. c. 4. ἡ δὲ τοῦ μητρὶς ... πῶς ἐτίθει ἀγγελίαν" (2.) For edict see Hiquc p. 243. (3) De Const. X. 1. 11.
 (4) The couplet was said to be pinned in a public place:— Saturni aurea saccula quis requirat.
 Sunt haec gemmae, sed Neroniana.
~~Redundant Saturni regna,~~

effectively stands, in the modern historian's eyes, as an obstacle to accepting him at his own estimate, as the God-instructed, God-chosen Champion of the Christian religion.⁽¹⁾

The event does not fail to enlighten us also as to the fact that rebellion and partition of the Empire was a possibility of the times. Rome as an administrative centre was ever notoriously ill-placed. Even for the government of Italy modern rulers have felt its awkwardness. How ill adapted it was to exercise the central control over the wide Empire of Constantine may be supposed. He had shaken himself free from that religious reverence which bound all his predecessors to the sacred city, and indeed the religious sanction he sought to bind upon his subjects suggested an Eastern location. A new city with a new sacred association binding together the prestige of the Christian faith and the prestige of the Empire was what he required. He found this in Byzantium, to be called Constantinople after its illustrious founder, and to be filled with places of Christian worship such as might rival, if not eclipse, the heathen temples in the ancient capital.⁽²⁾ The allegation of Eusebius that no relics of heathen worship were to be permitted within its walls is exaggeration, since we find that the Fortune of the City had its own cult and that a tablet was dedicated to this goddess to celebrate the Gothic victory of 332 A.D. A number of inscriptions indeed prove that the contention of Christian writers as to the Christian purity of Constantinople cannot be maintained.⁽³⁾ The attempt however to outstrip Roman grandeur is also apparent. There was a vein of Oriental extravagance in ~~his~~ ^{the Emperor's} nature which delighted in such work. He laid out the borders of his new city on so wide a scale that those with him ~~expressed their wonder~~ ⁽⁴⁾ ~~exclaimed~~. He adorned it at the greatest expense and dedicated it as the seat of empire in the year 330 A.D. ⁽⁵⁾ He built in it two Churches, one dedicated to the Apostles and the

⁽¹⁾ "Interfecti numerosos amicos" of the neutral Eutrophius is sufficient evidence that Constantine's office did not cause him to break with the worst crimes associated with the Purple.
⁽²⁾ Euseb. v. c. 52+3. Cf. Augustine De Civitate Dei v. 25. (3) Schiller quotes several p. 214 ff. e.g. C. 14
 3. 343 Cf. also Socrat. III. 11 Sozom. V. 4. Julian Epist. (Lact III. 301) Fragment.
⁽⁴⁾ Socrat I. 16. Soz. II. 3. ⁽⁵⁾ Euseb v. c. IV. 58.

other to Peace. The former building was of a vast height brilliantly decorated with coloured marbles. The inner roof was of fretwork overlaid with gold. The roof was of brass and also adorned with gold. ⁽¹⁾ Ranges of buildings surrounded it on all sides containing baths, promenades and all manner of apartments to suit the convenience of clergy and worshippers. The completion of this erection took nearly to the end of Constantine's life. In the interval, however, he erected ⁽²⁾ in other parts of the city sacred edifices to the memory of the martyrs, and erected other striking and magnificent shrines in his own palace. One vast tablet commemorative of our Lord's passion was a priceless work in gold and jewels. ⁽³⁾ He was not afraid to rob heathen temples ⁽²⁾ to adorn these Christian shrines, but markedly kept the heathen shrines impoverished, not we may believe from motives of economy so much as of policy. ⁽³⁾ Free provisions and subsidies for private builders increased the number of inhabitants of the new city, and it became especially popular with those of Christian faith. Speedily, both in splendour of buildings and in size of population, it gained the verdict of being the superlative city of the Empire.

Meantime in other parts, similar work for the enrichment of the Church went forward. Beautiful erections were built at Bethlehem, the Mount of Olives, Mambre, and other places connected with scriptural events. ⁽⁴⁾ The places of martyrdom were similarly honoured and, at Nicomedia, Alexandria, Antioch, and important Christian centres, were consecrated larger and more beautiful buildings than Christians had ever possessed. He took bold steps against pagan temples built at holy sites. A temple of Venus in Jerusalem ^{he is said to have} razed to the ground. Believing that he had, by a revelation to his mother, Helena, discovered the site of the Holy

(1) Socr. I. 6. (2) Zosimus II. 35. + Christian writers confirm. e.g. Sozomen. I. 5.
 (3) Ammian. Marcell. VII. IV. 13. (4) Euseb. V.C. III. 48, 50, 52, 53.

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Sepulchre, he dug out the underground cave, and ordered a Church to be built which should surpass in beauty every building in the realm.

The Church historian ⁽¹⁾ speaks of it when created as like the New Jerusalem, as it stood without the walls of the old city. The following letter shows the personal interest he took in all this sort of work. It refers to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre: ⁽²⁾

"Whatever wants you mention, shall be supplied; for that, which is of all places the most wonderful, ought to be rendered the most beautiful. I wish to learn from you whether you think that the royal arch ought to be fluted or to be adorned in some other way; for if it is to be fluted, it would be well to gild it. Your holiness must signify to the aforesaid Officers, as soon as possible, what workmen and artificers and what sums of money are requisite; and let me know promptly not only what marbles and columns, but also what ornamental works are considered the most beautiful. May God preserve you, beloved brother."

It is almost certain that heathen temples were allowed to fall into considerable dis-repair and some may even have been stripped of their doors and roofs to furnish material for other buildings. ~~(2)~~ The heathen subjects compared "Bull-neck's" progress in these days to that of some orphan-heir let loose from his guardians. ⁽³⁾ He ordered golden images to be melted down and converted into money for public purposes. ~~(4)~~ The pagans soon saw their shrines in a state of neglect, or repaired with straw and hay, which was not without effect in leading them to despise what formerly was venerated and ^{to} give their attention to the institutions so favoured by the royal munificence. ⁽⁴⁾

Similarly, Christian ministers were provided for on an annual scale ⁽⁵⁾ which even a Christian historian admits to be beyond their necessities. Christian widows and orphans were put far

(1) Eusebius, *loc. cit.* (2) Ib. v.c. III. 30ff (3) Victor Aurel. *De Imp. Vita et Moral.* Xxi quotes Jerome.
(4) See *Genes* v.c. III. 54, 56 & 58 & *Sozom.* II. 5. (5) Theodor. I. 11.

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beyond all danger of starvation. The general allowance, made from public funds for these purposes, was admittedly three times what was necessary. In addition he courted the society of the clerics, was always accompanied by a retinue of them in his journeys, and had not only a travelling priest-hood but a "tabernacle" for his worship. As important as buildings, he held were the sacred writings.⁽¹⁾ He granted funds from his treasury for the preparation of copies of the Scriptures, and these too were to show the magnificence to be associated with everything Christian.

Some local customs which gave prestige to centres of heathen worship, as, for example, the practice of carrying a symbolic cubit into the temple of Serapis, he conveyed over into a Christian setting, whereby a dedication ceremony in a Christian Church might show that the annual inundation of the Nile was an act of God's providence and not of a pagan deity.⁽²⁾ It is alleged by one authority that he forbade ~~that his image should be set up~~ ^{the erection of his statue} in heathen Temples; according to another, he put his own image in these places in preference to that of the gods. He may indeed have treated different places in a different manner, but all tended in the direction of depressing paganism at the expense of Christianity. He was, however, probably not averse to being regarded by his pagan subjects in a divine light.

Some attention too was given to the general elevation of morals. Images objectionable on the grounds of modesty were removed,⁽³⁾ and one temple received a more chaste representation of their goddess. Others devoted to impure rites were destroyed. He is credited by one historian⁽⁴⁾ with having abolished ^{all} gladiatorial shows, ^{and an edict to this effect stands in his name, but the prohibition was probably} ~~but this was only have been a prohibition local to Constantinople, for at Rome their end did not come until much later. Perhaps~~ ^{probably,} With the object of restricting the evil trade he put a tax upon

- (1) See his letter on this subject to Euseb. IV. 35 & 36. (2) Socrat. I. 18.
(3) Euseb. III. 56-58. Sozomen puts this action in very earliest part of his reign. (4) Socrat I. 18. Eod. Justin. ^{in ep. 293}. Cod. Theod. XV. Tit. XII. 1. Gladiatorial shows continued also at Antioch, (Lebanus de Vita p. 3) and in Italy (Ambrose ^{De} ~~II~~ ^{Officiis} cap. 21)

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(1) prostitution, but the general effect of this tax, (called the Chrysargyrum, because it had to be paid in gold or silver) which was levied on all small ~~trading~~ ^{transactions of trade,} was so oppressive to poor people, that it increased this evil rather than diminished it. We may give him credit however for a general attempt to improve morals, and although, in heathen eyes, his neglect and repression of their worship seemed impious, he was never a persecutor. His only oppressions were the result of his unbounded extravagance. Otherwise he was, as a fair-minded heathen writer⁽²⁾ acknowledges, "agreeable in many things, an encourager of the arts, and a suppressor of calumnies." He erected several works of public utility such as the bridge over the Danube. In general there was little cause for the people of his day to bemoan under his rule.⁽³⁾

He was careful moreover that the cruel work of persecution should not go on even outside his territories. In the interests of the Church's prestige and of common humanity, he addressed letters⁽⁴⁾ to the King of the Persians who had been treating Christians hardly, warning him that the fate of the enemies of religion had always been terrible, and declaring his own hatred of idolatry and his earnestness for the true faith. "With joy", he writes, "I heard tidings that the fairest districts of Persia are filled with these men on whose behalf alone, I am at present speaking. I pray therefore that both you and they may enjoy abundant prosperity, and that your blessings and theirs may be in equal measure. And now because your power is great I commend these persons to your protection; because your piety is eminent I commit them to your care. Cherish them with your wonted humanity and kindness, for by this proof of faith you will secure an immeasurable benefit both to yourself and to us."

He is even credited with the extension of evangelisation to ~~India~~⁽⁵⁾ Abyssinia. It was believed that St. Bartholomew had carried the

- (1) So Zosimus II. 18, and despite Sozomenus III. 40, he is probably correct.
- (2) Vult. Aard. D. V. t. Imp. et Mor. XVI. (3) The complaints are more bitter when the historians view them across the interval of Constantine's bad administration.
- (4) Letter quoted Euseb. V. C. IV. 13. (5) See Sozat. I. 19+20. Rufinus is his authority and he vouches with particularity for the truth of these events.

Gospel to that land in apostolic times, but at this period two Christian youths were captured and made slaves of a ruler in some part of the interior. One of these became on the king's death a person of authority. He sought for Christian instructors, and Athanasius, ~~late~~ recently created bishop of Alexandria, to whom he appealed, ordained this man himself to the work of missionising in ~~India~~ ^{Abyssinia}. The Iberians also, who were a race on the Euxine, were similarly won to the faith through a captive-woman. An embassy was thereupon sent to Constantine by this race, requesting that henceforth they might be in alliance with the Romans and that they might receive from them a bishop and clergy. ^{Many writers have this story} ~~Socratic quotes~~
(1) ~~But Rufinus is their confessed authority who says he~~ ^{But Rufinus is their confessed authority who says he} ~~Rufinus as his authority who had~~ obtained the information at first-hand from the principal actors in the story. ^{occurred they} ~~If such events~~ might prove to Constantine the political value of his ecclesiastical policy. ~~→~~

A rich and powerful Church could only serve Constantine's purpose, however, if he were allowed to be its leader and head. Otherwise he might be found to have been liberal to his own undoing. He had had ample evidence, indeed, that the bishops could not be controlled by force. The Imperial rank might serve as a check upon many, but the majority of the adherents of a spiritual religion, which despised earthly things, would naturally look for a better authority, than mere worldly rank. His predecessors had remained dominant by assuming divinity. He needed something whereby he might shine with superhuman brilliance. "More than can be estimated greedy of praise," such was a fair estimate of his character. ⁽²⁾ In every environment he tried to live up to the best expected of him. He was constantly to be found now in the company of clerics and so assumed the external aspect of a saint. ⁽³⁾ His coins ⁽⁴⁾ now showed him in a characteristic poise with his head

(1) ~~For all Socrates' protestations these stories cannot be accepted absolutely.~~
(1) Rufinus I. 9 (2) De Imp. mor. et Vet. Xvi.

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thrown back, believed to represent the attitude of prayer. He secluded himself in his palace for the professed purpose of meditation. He let it be known that he passed sleepless nights in furnishing himself with knowledge. He delivered homilies to his subjects, denouncing greed and covetousness, from which faults he himself was certainly free to excess. He loved to demonstrate to select audiences the errors of polytheism and, above all, the divine providence revealed in his own exaltation to supreme rule. The main elements of his creed were - "One God and Constantine." Nevertheless he did not fall into the error of Herod, for when outbursts of applause greeted his orations, he pointed upward directing that the glory should be given not to him, but to Heaven. Bishops refused to preach to him, alleging that he needed not their instruction, yet he would hear them with modesty, even standing, so great was his reverence for the words of holy men. Eusebius did not hesitate in his oration at the Dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to call him, "taught of God", yet humbly he hearkened to the lowliest men, and at Nicaea kissed again and again the empty socket of Paphnutius who had lost an eye in the persecutions.

All this would have been but little, but, even granting that the affair of Crispus is "not proven", his highest admirers cannot call his religion high and enlightened. He mixed his view of the Church with the old Roman idea of religion, as a State affair. He laid little emphasis on Christ's life or precepts, in his discourses. ⁽¹⁾ Even if we are to believe in his attempts to lead a life of devotion, can we accept his revelations and visions? Can we think that one whose religion was liberally tinged with worldliness, whose instruction in the things of the faith was meagre, and whose conduct, though above the standard of his age for an emperor's, yet was not level with that demanded by the Church of

(1) Schiller believes that there is no real Christianity in any of his utterances.

catechumens, can we believe that such an one would be favoured with foreknowledge of God's purposes? It was his wish that he should be understood to live in a perpetual atmosphere of miracle. Measuring out the walls of Byzantium he saw a figure before him, and, not till that mysterious stranger, stopped, did he declare the boundary complete. ⁽¹⁾ His mother, Helena, found out the place of Christ's burial by a revelation from Heaven. His sacred sign and battle-standard, called the Labarum, had been adopted by him at the Milvian Bridge. He now said that he had received it at the hands of Christ Himself, ^{(2) and} that the appearance of it had shone in the sky at noon, and had been seen by all his soldiers. In the Licinian campaign, as he further narrated, a cowardly standard-bearer who deserted it was struck dead upon the spot, while the man, who received it at the traitor's hands, remained unhurt amidst a shower of missiles, which were all turned away by the narrow spear which upheld it. "Truly a marvellous circumstance!" exclaims the simple Eusebius, ⁽³⁾ adding that he would not have believed it if the Emperor had not told him himself. This is one of the most enlightening asides in history. The Emperor told him himself! The excessive flattery of sycophants, the natural reverence of a persecuted people for their deliverer, or the vulgar fondness for the marvellous might have accounted for the presence of these and similar recorded 'miracles' in connection with Constantine; but he, we are expressly told, vouched for the most incredible himself. Even allowing for the excitement of battle, one cannot believe that he ever saw or thought he saw any such marvel. The theory of his special inspiration and of God's active intervention on his behalf came from himself. This throws its light on the whole atmosphere of his life, his assumed piety and ^{his} devotion, to the point of an almost super-human goodness. These are not flatteries.

(1) Euseb. Eccl. hist. (2) R.C. I. 20. (3) R.C. II. 9.

Eusebius is simply the plastic clay which Constantine moulds. His thoughts of Constantine are Constantine, as he would be thought, not only of course by this passionate admirer, but by all the Church. Constantine, not by help of military prestige, not by the absurd claims of his predecessors to divine nature, but as a King-Messiah in himself, a deliverer like Cyrus, as a bishop, yet above the rank and file of the bishops, as a Christian, yet more godly and more heavenly-favoured than ordinary Christians, the builder of the City of God which Heaven ordained should bear his name, was he not the natural Head and Ruler of all Christians on the earth? This quotation from a letter reveals ⁽¹⁾ his self-consciousness of his unique destiny, "For indeed through my service of God the wide world is at peace, and the name of God is sincerely revered by the barbarians even, who, until now, have not known the truth Nevertheless the barbarians now have come to know God through me, his true servant, and they have learned to fear Him, Whom they see to have shielded me and protected me everywhere. From this chiefly they have come to know God, whom they reverence because of their fear of me."

So he would have all men believe, as, no doubt, he believed himself that God had chosen and set him on high over all his people in a Churchly State, for such a half-Messianic picture of his great destiny he seemed to have formed.

Constantine's figure with uplifted head, the common device of his later coinage, is indeed the subtle change effected from Caesar-godhead to some new conception of imperial sanctity. What that conception was is scarcely defined but it is everywhere hinted at to be more than is vouched to the ordinary human being. When after his death he was given the title "Equal of the Apostles", perhaps there was put in language what throughout his life he had

(1) Letter to Athanasius quoted by A. in Contra Arian. Apol. 786.

insinuated that he was. A function indeed half-Messianic seemed to be his, and the effect of his vague, yet very effective, assumptions of special sanctity had indeed in certain quarters with the Churchmen the very effect which was designed. Eusebius narrates to us the honours paid to him after his death, the salutation of the soldiers and the representation of his assumption to Heaven. These tributes had his hearty approval, because the Emperor was, in his opinion, honoured by God for a more than ordinary piety. Even while he was alive, a statue of him with the Cross above and the Dragon under his feet seemed a suitable representation of his achievements.

In him ancient prophecies seemed to be fulfilled. His city and his temples were actually described as emblems of the Divine Kingdom raising itself visibly upon earth. Eusebius indeed just stops short of blasphemy, and he was an enlightened cleric. We may be certain that not a few Christians went beyond this point. The nation was just emerging from the dominance of the Caesar-cult, we must remember, and in many minds the distinction between the human and ^{the} divine was vague. Constantine attempted no definition of his sanctity in any terms whatever to the Christians, but what measure of spiritual exaltation he assumed, we may be certain went very far in the direction of giving him that prestige which Christian belief had destroyed for the Caesars. With his other subjects he was still 'Divus', and if for the Church he could assume a vague semi-apostolic dignity, and hold the Church itself united, his imperial task was accomplished.

(1) We have decrees of the date 326 A.D. which speak of his dominating tone in ecclesiastical affairs. He ordered that if a cleric died, his place was to be filled only by such a man as could not discharge the public functions from which the clergy were immune.

(1) In Inique p. 314. all these are to be found collected. Codex Theod. XVI. Tit. De Haereticis l. 1.

Of the same date is a law excluding all heretic priests from these privileges, ^{although a short time afterwards made} ~~and~~ another ~~making~~ exception in favour of the Novatians. (1)
In 331 A.D. such immunities were granted to Jewish patriarchs and presbyters, which is evidently a restoration similar to that made on behalf of the Novatians. The attitude of Constantine was thus dominant within the Church ^{with these exceptions,} and repressive of all movements outside of it. The Codex Theod. XII, 5.2. establishes the fact that the privileges of heathen colleges were never interfered with, but we draw from these facts the wrong conclusion if we suppose that the weight of his personal authority was not thrown heavily against all polytheistic practices. Schiller supposes that his principle was that the State was above all creeds and could only recognise what was common to all. Such is, however, a conclusion only reached by allowing undue weight to small indications of his general policy of tolerance. His motives in fact drove him in diverse directions. He was averse as ever to private and unauthorised religious bodies. In this class he now regarded ^{the} Heathen, ^{the} Jews and ^{the} Christian heretics. He was opposed to force according to the spirit of his Nicomedian decree, but he believed it possible by kindly tolerance to gain over all men to Catholic unity. In pursuance of this policy he had need to continue the heathen priesthood in privilege and even to carry out certain official acts of homage to their religion. Smaller bodies, he supposed, however, ~~that he might~~ ^{be} dissipated by repressive actions. He had added civil banishment to ecclesiastical excommunication for heretical teaching, and in other ways, locally, he allowed the Catholic bishops to use the secular arm to secure uniformity. There were certain larger sects, however, which could not be so dealt with. The Novatians and the Jews proved themselves to be such. Those he oppressed at first, then left alone, and with

(1) Cod. Theod. XVI. Tit. V c. 2. (2) Cod. Theod. XVI. Tit. VIII. 2 This refers to the Jews in language very different from that c. 1. of the same Title (dated 315). As there is reason to believe that the Jews enjoyed these immunities under Emperors previous to Constantine, it may be supposed that the act of 331 A.D. was a restoration of privileges which he himself had allowed to lapse, or at the time of the decree against heretics of 326 A.D. had definitely taken away.

wisdom, for in neither was there such a spirit as could either be crushed or rendered favourable to political aims. We have evidence that he took an immense amount of care in searching out the facts about each sect of Christianity, employing a special official, for example, to examine into the case of the Manichaeans. His resolute policy was that all such should, either by accommodations ^{by bloodless} or repressions, ~~mild in a Roman sense of the word~~ be driven into union with the Catholic body. A fair sample of his attitude towards all dissentients from Catholic unity is to be found in a letter written to Theodotus, regarding even such a favourite as Eusebius of Nicomedia. There are indeed a great many venomous letters on the subject of heresy transmitted by historians of the period. The letter to Arius we have already noted ⁽¹⁾ as too absurd to be genuine, and similarly the Epistola ad Nicomedienses betrays its inauthenticity by its long preamble upon the Trinitarian faith. Another letter ⁽²⁾ to the ~~Nicomedian~~ ^{Numidian} bishops has too much reasoning on the connection of heresy with the devil to emanate from a non-ecclesiastical source, ~~but~~ ⁽³⁾ The letter to Theodotus on the defection of Eusebius and Theognis has ^{however} none of these signs of forgery. These bishops, we are elsewhere informed, stung by the reproaches of Arius, afterwards declared themselves dissatisfied with the findings of Nicaea and for this were banished. This letter records their banishment, and its heat and harshness ^{may} ~~will~~ represent to us the iron will which sought to bind the Church into unity. His subsequent dealings with these bishops illustrates also his suavity. About 328 A.D. one would judge, he had suggested to Arius that he might return and "clear himself of the charges made against him." He speaks at all events in 331 A.D. of having written at some earlier period to him in such a tone, ⁽⁴⁾ and the Nicomedian

Para.

- (1) Part quoted Theodoret I. 20. Its acrimony and keen partisanship is obviously ecclesiastical in origin. Constantian phrases referring to his being the fellow-servant of the Churchmen and the cause of Christianity have spread into all parts and introduced to give an air of authenticity from other sources. (to be found in Meqne p. 519) (2) Meqne p. 531.
- (3) Meqne p. 523. (4) Loc. cit. 56/.

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bishop wrote about 328, requesting restoration on the ground that since he had professed willingness to pardon the chief offender, he and Theognis might look for equal leniency. Constantine granted them permission to visit him and they satisfied him as to their soundness in faith. He made no attempt, be it noted, to admit Arianism as such. He apparently tested them by the Nicæan formula as he understood it and absolved them, and sent them back again to their Sees. We have, no evidence, at least of any Council in the case of these bishops either condemning or re-admitting these bishops. The Emperor seems to have acted entirely on his own authority throughout. Not only so but Eusebius gained great favour with him after this time. A certain presbyter of the Court, Acacius, was credited with using arguments on his behalf, and he himself, by alleging that he thought Church unity a more important matter than theological accuracy, won instant approval from Constantine. Thereafter his future power was assured. He represented the very type of Churchman whom the Emperor could use, and the Eusebian or Acacian party became an important factor thereafter in ecclesiastical affairs. It is always difficult to know who is the dominating force in a partnership. Battifol credits the Eusebians with power over the Emperor, It had not been so at Nicæa however, and the more credible supposition is that Constantine was still the master of the situation and the Eusebians the instruments of his will, glad to be so for the prestige which the position gave to them, and eagerly working out a policy of outward uniformity and of sound political conservatism in accordance with their ^{own characteristic} ~~Eusebian~~ mentality.

Constantine then is visibly one who thought heresy to be a matter of will rather than of faith. A little exile might cure it, at the end of which a kindly pardon might make a staunch State-

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party churchman out of the former rebel. Thus far and wide with harsh language and civil penalty, with generous and extravagant support for the obedient, and a welcome ever ready for the penitent, he hoped to "Eusebianise" the whole church and, with the double rein of State and Church, exercise a perfect control over the fiery steed he had to drive. There seems at first sight no reason why he might not have succeeded. Strongly convinced anti-Homoousians had sat silent at Nicaea. The most violent had accepted the word. Even Arius might return and hand in his submission. Soon one might expect Melitians, Donatists and all other sectaries, followed, at last, by the pagan worshippers themselves, to come within the fold of this body which the Emperor so carefully fostered.

What made the hope impossible? Something absurd as it seems! A word! Or rather a mere letter! We are forced to ask why the Church debated throughout the time of Constantine and his sons the Homoousian question as if the fate of humanity hung upon it. Can we fail to read a connection between the weight of significance, flung upon the issue of this word, ^{and} ~~with~~ the clash of Empire and Church, really fighting in a death-grapple for their separate life? We are profoundly of opinion that any estimation of the situation which overlooks this hidden link will be a very shallow one. When we look forward, we consider that when Church and State separated from each other under Julian and withdrew to their former positions of aloofness, nay previous to that, when at Seleucia and Rimini the orthodox, both of East and West, went into the wilderness and left the Eusebians to their fate, the violent **Anti**-Sabellian and violent Homoousian understood each other and were at peace. When we look backward, we remember

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that the long war of Church and State, just ended, had been on the question of Jesus-God or Caesar-God.⁽¹⁾ Are we not forced then to ask whether the Western and Eastern Christians did not derive the irreconcilability of their dogmatic protest from one and the same fear?² The Western Homöousians^{hardly} was afraid that if Christ were lowered too near the human, the world would gain its rule once more over the people. The Eastern Anti-Sabellian was nervous of anything that might tend to lose Jesus in mere deity with a similar disastrous over-exaltation of the human and alive representatives of His rule? A vague fear in both of losing Christ, the Saviour, in the old organised system of Roman law, however Christianised it might become, caused the strange fierceness wherewith many, as we may believe, completely orthodox on both sides, fought out the battle for the word which would define orthodoxy. ~~The Eusebian party which represented the State within the Church helped to obscure the issues. They were that party, which we have called Eusebian.~~ ^{Obscuring the issues, for both} ~~It played its hand~~ on the State's side, for a broad indefinite faith, but above all for a Church united in organisation and discipline. Its part was that of spies within the gate, but the real danger was Porphyrianism which doctrine probably many State-led Christians held, and which indeed was the vague menace behind the Emperor's unparalleled assumptions of spiritual authority. There is an instinct truer than reason and ^{it is} a mark of a high degree of vitality. It is surely a true statement, with regard to the facts of Constantine's reign, to say that there broke out in it an unparalleled panic for the God-head of Christ, a panic as we believe, equally marked in the East and the West. He who views this as a strange and irrational phenomenon must confessedly have missed the movement behind the events. We would submit that that movement, unexpressed indeed and nowhere becoming vocal, was towards some expression in Christian terms of the ^{deification of the Emperor.} ~~Caesar-godhead.~~ What that form could have been we do

(1) See Westcott's The Two Empires.

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not know. Certain Church writers hover round the idea that prophecies of the Second Coming were fulfilled in Constantinian glory. He received later the title "Equal to the Apostles". A dynastic apostleship might not have seemed absurd in the mind of people emerging from faith in dynastic divinity. The point is that this, and not small matters of secularisation, was the issue, and that the Church, with the acute-imaginative terror of a nervous vitality, raised such a clamour that the very possibility passed away utterly and in silence.

It may be said also that even had the Catholic body failed in this respect, this absorption of Christianity into the Imperial scheme could not have succeeded. The sects, as we have already noted, were practically intangible. Had the Church become Eusebian, Novatianism would have become the Church and, although imperfectly fitted to express its fullest message, would have probably awaited, uncorrupted, for times which might make possible a witness of larger power. Apart from those, however, there existed and flourished the great force of monasticism which from the period after Nicaea received still more and more support. For long popular in the East it was now growing in favour in the West, also. Harnack⁽¹⁾ enumerates for us the motives which led to the choice of such a life; - the reputation of sanctity, dissatisfaction with the world, dislike of work, the peace which no longer made martyrdom a possibility, to make atonement for sin, to become saints or to pose as such. There were many types, some simple and some subtle, some seeking learning, some seeking contact with Nature, and others despising both, some practising that kind of ^{asceticism} ~~asceticism~~ which seeks in utter seclusion to find God, and others full of good works of mercy to the poor. The mystical element predominated and their peculiar

(1) *Mönchtum & Ideale* p. 48 (tr. Williams & Morgate) To these Troeltsch adds the "overripe and played-out culture", the fear of the demons of the world, and a widespread unknown sexual trouble. *Soziallehre* p. 97ff.

position was that they shunned for the most part not merely ecclesiastical offices but even the sacraments and other common forms of religious exercise. They eschewed of course all seeking of honour, all wealth, ~~or~~ ^{and} even ~~moderate~~ ^{ordinary} comfort. Moderate in ~~all~~ their own demands upon the world, they were nevertheless ready to befriend those suffering from privations and affliction. This mode of life, or philosophy (*ἁσκησις*) as it was then called, had as its pre-eminent exponent the famous Antony, of whose life Athanasius has given us a full account. He fought with the wiles of the devil in the Egyptian deserts, and was credited with many miracles. His ~~high~~ ^{strict} austerity was a cause of wonder. His hatred of indolence, his meekness, and his zeal for the oppressed, caused his name to be a subject of praise in all the Churches. The Emperor indeed heard of his fame, and wrote urging him ⁽¹⁾ to proffer any request that he might wish, but a man of this temper had no more to demand of Constantine, than had Diogenes, the Cynic, of King Alexander. He said that, as fishes found their natural habitat in the waters, so God had prepared the desert, the garden of God, for the monks who otherwise would lose the essence of their life among wordly ways. He had many followers and disciples, notably one Paul, the Simple, of whom the romantic story is, that finding his beautiful and greatly loved wife no longer his in heart, he left her, without anger, to the man whom she had come to love, and went out into the wilderness to a life of prayer. St. Ammon was also famed as a founder of monasteries and as a man of extraordinary piety.

The impetus to monasticism cannot be laid entirely to the charge of Constantine, since Antony, for example, probably founded his convent about 305, when the Emperor was only coming to power

(1) Athan. is our authority. Meqne p. 551.

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in the West. There is little doubt however that it gained increasing hold because of the wordly ambitions of the clerics, the disputes engendered by the secular value of the bishoprics, the immense ~~increase in~~ ^{increase in} the Church of converts of inferior moral enthusiasm, and the despiritualising effect of Constantine and his Eusebian party's domination. These monks were respected in the Church with the utmost veneration. Their withdrawal was not regarded as at all similar to the desertion of the sectaries. The fact, that the Catholic body was able to open up a place for them, revealed the possession of a potent weapon against the dangers of over-secularisation, for the world can never establish its hold over one who glories in his independence of all it has to offer. These men became teachers and prophets to Christians. Their lives were studied, their words prized, their prayers abundantly requested.⁽¹⁾ They formed therefore a priesthood after a new fashion, founded not on ecclesiastical authority but on ~~actual~~ ^{sheer} moral worth. The actual clerics were in many cases strongly influenced by them, and the whole body of the people made them their heroes. Their separation was not therefore so acute as it seemed, and they were more or less established in an effective way as a prophetic class of spiritual mentors and intercessors, perhaps more esteemed than the regular clergy. Thus the essence of Christianity revealed again how *sensitively* ~~sensitive it was~~ ^{alert it was} to escape from secularising forces. Even had Constantine succeeded to the fullest degree he would have had a new class of officials, his Eusebianised clergy, impotent in his hands while these priests of the wilderness would have represented the progressive and, to his government, revolutionary forces of Christianity intangible as ever, but yet powerful in their influence over his subjects.

(1) See Papyri Brit Museum 1923, 4, 5/6, 8 & 9. 1929 being perhaps request for prayer from Athanasius himself. (Bk. Jews & Christians in Egypt.).

It has to be noted, also, however, that the withdrawal of the Church's best blood from clerical office and from the arena of conflict gave to him and the Eusebians still greater power. The government of her affairs was often left in the hands of worldlings. It almost happened that Athanasius was lost in this way to the Church. Some monks even mutilated themselves so that they might be unfit for ordination. In this way the battle was still harder for those who remained in the area of conflict, and the heroic appeal of the monk had ever this defect, that it was impossible for all men, ~~and~~ So, no more than the Novatian, could they appeal to the world, and it was after all the world, which they shunned, for which Christ had died.⁽¹⁾ To that arena of struggle and warfare, we return then in our next chapter.

(1) Cf Troeltsch: Heronism of apostolic times was world-conquering but this was shunning of it by those who were overcome. (loc. cit.)

CHAPTER VII.

A T H A N A S I U S.



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CHAPTER VII.

ALEXANDRIA.

Despite the efforts of Constantine to secure peace, discord was destined to be the Church's portion for long and particularly in Alexandria. As we approach the study of events in that region we enter on what is not only a very acute controversy in itself, but has formed the subject of bewildering debates among historians. We have indeed an extraordinary amount of facts, transmitted to us regarding the incidents of Athanasius' historic fight for the Homocousian doctrine, and it is the plethora of detail which causes confusion. Athanasius transmitted his records in polemical not in historic form and consequently his sequence is most irregular. Again he was acutely interested in the struggle and cannot therefore be always relied upon to give us the proper perspective or to define the motives of opponents with impartiality.

The very date when he entered upon his bishopric is a matter of doubt. According to his account Alexander, the Bishop of Alexandria, died five months after the Council of Nicaea.⁽¹⁾ The Index to the Festal letters of Athanasius dates his death, however, in April 328, and the accession of Athanasius in June of the same year. Epiphanius who is rather favourable to the Melitians, showing as some think, their own traditions of their history says that Alexander persecuted the Melitians after the death of Melitius. Melitius however was alive after the Council because we know that he gave the bishop a list of his clergy which Athanasius quotes. Gwatkin⁽²⁾ attempts to reconcile the difference by supposing that the five months is meant to count not from the date of Nicaea, but from the actual reception of the Meletians in accordance with its

(1) *Apol. agt Ariens* § 59 (2) *Studies of Arianism*. p. 66.

decisions. Epiphanius however and Rufinus agree in the tradition that Athanasius fled from the bishopric or was absent at the time of its becoming vacant, and the former credits the Melitians with elevating one of their own party to this office, called Theonas, who died in 328, three months before Athanasius' return. We may take it as certain, therefore, no matter when Alexander died, that Athanasius was not enthroned until 328 A.D. That the Melitians should hold the interregnum might be regarded as in keeping with the Nicaean Decree, and the absence of Athanasius, if such a course were to be observed, would be only politic.

The first indication we have of his relations with Constantine is in a letter of the Emperor, which he ^{has} transmitted to us, in these terms:-(1)

"Having therefore knowledge of my will, grant to all who wish to enter the Church free admission. For if I learn that you have hindered or excluded any who claim to be admitted into communion with the Church, I will immediately send someone who will depose you by my command and shall remove you from your place."

The tone of such a letter reveals Constantine's assumption of place within the ecclesiastical body most clearly. Athanasius tells us that the occasion which called it forth was the desire of the Emperor to bring in Arians, not Arius be it noted but men of his views. (2) He wrote back to point out to the Emperor that it was impossible to admit to membership those who warred against Christ (ΧΡΙΣΤΟΜΑΧΟΙ). We thus see the authority of State and Church in a conflict of wills. The Imperial and Ecclesiastical rule are stripped apparently and measuring weapons, but the contest was not to be a mere clash of authority and power, at least not yet. We do not know what reply the intrepid bishop received, but we do know how he brought upon him the enmity of his fellow clerics, who

(1) loc. cit. (2) The phrase of Athan. is τοὺς περὶ Ἀρείου, and this in Athan's terminology may mean Melitians, Eusebians or others. Historians repeatedly read it as referring to Arius himself and place the letter thus near the year 336 when Arius was recalled, thus confusing the whole sequence of events. The inference is that Athan. put all desiring admission to a strict doctrinal test of which ~~Athan.~~ the Emperor did not approve.

formed the State-Party in the Church. (1)

Athanasius proceeded on a conception of his duty which ~~was~~ inevitably put him at variance with a cleric of the type of Eusebius of Nicomedia. He was of the imperial mind so far as the question of the suppression of all heretics went. He was not averse to making liberal use of civil force for that end, but the Emperor had a politic termination to his desire for suppression, whereas the Alexandrian bishop knew none. He defined doctrine first and then would have none teach otherwise, but the Imperial definition of ~~truth was rather that which one could not prevent men from teaching without sedition.~~ ~~permitted doctrine was that which had~~ ~~truth was rather that which one could not prevent men from teaching without sedition.~~ ^a heresy to be suppressed, according to Constantine was one of small numbers. Athanasius would not halt for the sake of any numerical argument, as his life-story was to prove.

The Eusebians, naturally, ^{might take} ~~took~~ the view that he was over-zealous. He says that they made common cause with the Melitians out of spite and to give them help in their Arianizing, but we see ^{that} ~~Some of the motives~~ ~~the same motive~~ which made them befriend Arians, ^{might make} ~~made~~ them befriend Melitians. They were a peace-party, and his strictness, which cannot be doubted, made them continually opposed to him. A good deal of human jealousy moreover entered into these passages between the possessors of high office in proximate situation.

So the matter stood when the Emperor wrote his peremptory letter, and the Alexandrian bishop sent his courteous but unyielding reply. Quick upon this followed, according to his own narrative, the first of his many accusations. He does not fail to ascribe the origin of it to the Eusebians acting in conjunction with the unruly elements in his own See. He describes the charge at this stage, as the "accusation about the linen vestments." ⁽¹⁸⁾⁽³¹⁾ The accusers were certain of the clergy whom Meletius had ordained and who, by the

(1) Athan. loc. cit. Socrat. I. 14. Sozom. I. 16, Philostorgius, I. 10. (2) Eusebius held Arian views but was not enthusiastic for them as he was enthusiastic for a politic peaceful settlement. (3) Different explanations regarding this ^{charge} ~~are given~~, but none which makes its nature very clear. ^{have been suggested}

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action of the Nicene Council, had been restored to office, in suspension, until vacancies might be found for them. They would appear to have gone to the Emperor with their complaint, probably having heard of the reproofing letter. He found, however, that certain Presbyters of Athanasius were present in the city where he was (Nicomedia),⁽¹⁾ and examined them as to this matter. He found it both trifling and false. The Emperor then wrote to Athanasius in terms which condemned those who were responsible for the accusation, and made request that the Bishop should come to him. Eusebius, who was apparently entertaining these Meletian accusers, retained them with him until Athanasius might come, and on his arrival, they brought forward new accusations, enumerated as that about the "Chalice" and that of the "Chest of Gold".

The affair of the "Chalice" was an alleged act of violence on the part of Athanasius, or rather of his Presbyter, Macarius, towards a Sectary, Ischyrras, and his sacred vessels. This man had been, or at least averred that he had been, ordained by Colluthus, an extremist in a narrow direction. Colluthus had previously, however, been declared to be no bishop and so all ordinations of his were invalid. Ischyrras was not included in the list of Meletians, which was presented, and thus, according to the Orthodox party, had no status whatever, and consequently had no Church and no sacred vessels. It is plain, however, that he acted in the belief or pretence that he had, undismayed by the fact that he had very few adherents. Athanasius had to answer this accusation again and again, and it is rather notable that he always does so in the direction of arguing "No Priest, no Church, no Chalice". He found the evidence of the broken chalice to depend upon Catechumens, and hence asks what chalice it might be that was offered in the presence of the uninitiated. He leaves it always open to belief, however,

that while this Ischyra was irregular in his practices and a mere sectary, his house which he called a church may have been broken into and the vessels, which he in his schismatic conventicle called holy, broken.⁽¹⁾ It seems certain that the man himself was ill at the time, and this would make the conduct of Macarius, however incensed he may have been at this mummary of sacred rites, the more violent and harsh. There seems little doubt that he was sent by Athanasius to visit this home of sectarianism, and it may easily have occurred to him to break the vessels. At all events, Athanasius is more in earnest to prove that the vessel was common, than that it was not broken, and that the ceremonies carried on were irregular, than that they were never interrupted. The discovery, that the sect of Ischyra was composed of only seven persons, may have been what assured the Emperor upon the whole question. He was not averse to repressive measure where he thought them likely to effect peace, and so small a dissension as this might be better crushed out than accommodated.

The Eusebians probably felt the weakness of this case, and so sought to bolster it with the more formidable accusation, that Athanasius had sent a chest of gold to Philamenus. Whoever Philamenus may have been, Constantine had the reputation of being more than usually severe when anything threatened his imperial rule. Calocerus, the leader of some obscure rebellion, was burned alive in the streets of Tarsus, and if Philamenus were some insurrectionist of this type, Athanasius might have expected summary treatment. However, on hearing the defence of the bishop, the Emperor seems to have been completely satisfied as to his innocence. He gave him a letter⁽²⁾ which did not hesitate to call him a "man of God", and to upbraid his enemies most severely for their divisive courses, accusing them of sullen anger and maliciousness. He wrote,

(1) Ischyra in a Confession said later: "No chalice was broken", which does not yet clear up the point whether no vessel was broken, or the broken vessel was not a chalice. (2) The letter is in Athan. Apol. agt Arian 461.

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eloquently, though vaguely, on the subject of cabals and greed of office which were causing scandal in the Church of God, and authorised Athanasius to convey the ~~royal~~^{imperial} greetings with such suitable exhortations, as might come more fittingly from his lips than from his own. Thus peace for a time was restored in the diocese of Alexandria.

Meantime the Eusebian party had more successfully taken action against another bishop of the Athanasian faith, namely Eustathius of Antioch. He was ~~one~~^{a cleric} who had changed his See⁽¹⁾ according to ~~A~~^{one} writer by the act of the Nicene Council. ~~but he must~~^{This authority} ~~however be confusing~~^{surely confuse} a ratification of his translation with its actual execution, for the Council forbade further translations although it⁽²⁾ ratified these made. Theodoret may be right in connecting this attack upon Eustathius with a visit paid by Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis to Eastern parts. His date is hopelessly wrong because he puts it in time after the former's translation to the See of Constantinople. Previous to that time, however, Eusebius was growing in favour with the royal court, especially with its female members. At this time Helena, the Mother-Empress, was interesting herself, as we have seen, in the building of beautiful shrines to commemorate the scenes of sacred history. It may have been that these bishops were aiding her in this work. At all events one of the alleged accusations against the bishop of Antioch was of⁽³⁾ insult to the Emperor's mother. She was⁽⁴⁾ of doubtful origin, but it is unlikely that Eustathius made any spiteful reference to that fact. He was a man who had been energetic in combating Arian views, and the broad party who put Church unity above orthodoxy, whether with Arian leanings, such as the Nicomedian bishop, or with more or less orthodox faith, such as Eusebius of Caesarea, seem to

(1) Sozomen I. 2. (2) Theod I. 21. (3) Athan. Hist. Arian § 5.

(4) The daughter of a British innkeeper or king! The name was Colus. A modern suggestion is that the song "Old King Cole" is a third-century gibe at a tavern-keeper's royal connections!

have come under his censure.⁽¹⁾ It is said that he accused the latter of favouring Arian tenets. He may therefore have fallen foul of these favourites of the Court in such a manner that his conduct was regarded as insulting by Helena. It is also alleged that the charge against him was of the more heinous crime of immorality. That this accusation was brought forward is well attested in other writers, although Athanasius ignores it. The silence of Eusebius of Caesarea, who excuses himself from recording the letters of Constantine on this question as likely to fix marks of dishonour on certain names, rather confirms the belief that this was the real charge laid against him.⁽²⁾ The upholders of Nicene doctrines profess this to have been altogether a trumped-up pretext, the real malice against him being due to his vigorous stand for the true faith. Some indeed allege that the accusation was of the heresy of Sabellianism, but as Cyrus of Beroea is named as one⁽³⁾ of his accusers, and as he himself was afterwards deposed for this same heresy, little credence can be attached to this. It may be added that Eusebius of Caesarea, while he might take action against one whose violence for orthodoxy threatened the peace of the Church, would not strike at him with an illegitimate weapon. As often happens in the cases both of innocent and guilty, a strong party favoured the cleric, and when he was deposed at a Council held in his city, a fierce and dangerous sedition was raised. Eusebius of Caesarea, as was natural, from the position and prominence of his See, had been the leader of the accusers of the powerful prelate of Antioch. There rose two parties in the city, one of which clamoured for the former's translation to their ^{Bishopric} ~~head~~, the other for the reinstatement of the latter. The Emperor, however, sent an officer of his palace with letters to quell the disturbance, and Eusebius himself made the matter easier by refusing to accept translation in accordance with the

(1) Soc. I. 24, Sozom. II. 19. Theodor. I. 21. Philostorg. II. 7. (2) ^{Article} "Eustathius" in Wall & Smith Dicty of Biography takes opposite view. The innocence of Eustath. would make Eusebius of Caeser. very guilty. Opinion must be ruled by our estimate of the latter's character. (3) In Socrat. I. 24.

Nicene decision. He received an extremely laudatory letter from the Emperor in consequence, who averred that such a self-negation made a man worthy to be bishop not merely of a great city but of all the world. So great was the feeling however that no bishop was elected in room of the deposed prelate for several years, which must have tended to exalt the position of the incumbent of Caesarea.

Modern opinion varies very considerably as ^{to} the rights and wrongs of the question of Eustathius. It is clear however that if he was entirely innocent, then Eusebius of Caesarea was guilty of very unworthy ^{scheming} ~~showing~~ ^{against} ~~against~~ an important neighbouring bishop. If on the other hand he was guilty in some respect, Athanasius betrays a violent partisanship which is quite unjust to Eusebius in this matter. It appears on the whole easier to believe the latter hypothesis than the former, for the gift of impartiality, in a question concerning a partner in theological disputes, was not a gift of the Alexandrian bishop, and neither the words of Eusebius, ^{nor} ~~nor~~ his actions on this occasion, justify the belief that he was actuated by jealousy and self-seeking. Whatever the decisions of the Council were, the charge of immorality cannot be regarded as ~~pro~~ proven. The reason indeed why ^{such} accusations were made ^{against} ~~against~~ ^{Eustathius were just} ~~him were exactly~~ those which caused the multitude of charges against Athanasius. We are told that he would not admit among his clerics Stephen, Leontius, Eudoxius, George of Laodicea, Theodosius of Tripolis and Eustathius of Sebaste, suspecting them of Arian tendencies. George of Laodicea on the other hand considered him to be a Sabellian and supposed that he was deposed for that heresy. We see thus that ~~the~~ mutual suspicion of heresy ^{was} ~~was~~ rife, and that clerics in power were using their influence strongly to exclude suspects from their communion. This would cause serious division and would ~~not~~ ^{not} certainly win the approval of Constantine.

^{In particular,} Athanasius ^{was} ~~was~~ apparently vigorous and severe in his attempts to secure purity of faith. Accusations ^{against him} ~~were at least~~ ^{filantifal} ~~made~~

(1) *Atkan Hist. Arian. p. 5.* (2) *George's Incommin of Eusebius Emisians*
Quoted Socratus. I. 24.

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all
against him once more. It was alleged that he had loaded Ischyas
with chains, that a certain Callinicus had been put under military
guard and tortured, and that he had murdered a Bishop, Arsenius. Athanasius does not report
these accusations. He always puts ~~the~~ ^{Ischyas} ~~Ischyas~~ and Arsenius in the
forefront, either because there he had the best case, or because
the other charges were departed from. We may suspect that had
Callinicus been so easy a subject we would probably have heard more
about him. Might we judge then that Athanasius, armed with the
imperial letter which called him "Man of God", and with knowledge
of repressive edicts against heresy began to root out certain evils
in his diocese in his customary vigorous way? His opponents would,
of course, exaggerate his severity. Ischyas, it is alleged, threw
stones at the Emperor's statue to express his disappointment with
the decisions of his case; it would be more natural to suppose that
the civil officer took action, but there is no proof, of course, that
the bishop did not deal with him for this affront of majesty. We
have new evidence to hand upon this subject of the Severities of
Athanasius, and these prove that they were not merely the
slanders of his enemies.

Among the recently discovered manuscripts published by
Mr. H. Idris Bell under the title, Jews and Christians in Egypt, ⁽¹⁾ we
have ten papyri bearing upon the affairs of the Meletian body and
giving us the aspect of affairs from their point of view. From
these we are able to see what could not be gathered from the writings
of Athanasius, that behind their activities was a powerful moral
and religious force. In them we catch the atmosphere of an intense
brotherliness and of a certain patient resignation, showing us that
this fraternity, which called itself the Church of the Martyrs had
some of the high qualities which made sects of this sort the power
which they were. There is also evidence in them of the fact that
Athanasius freely used the civil power to repress the non-conforming
bodies in his See. Papyrus 1914 is the most important of these.
It may date, as Mr. Bell argues, in 335 at a period just immediately

(London 1924.)

before the Synod of Tyre, or it may refer to events just prior to the Synod of Caesarea. We find in it Athanasius hesitating as to whether to set out on a journey. He would seem, however, to have just made a decision not to sail, for he had taken his baggage off the ship. If he did not reverse ~~this~~ decision, then Caesarea is the destination referred to, for we know that when summoned by the Censor Dalmatius to answer the charges there, he delayed until he might have definite news as to the real fate of Arsenius, and when he heard that he had been discovered, he forwarded his proofs without answering the charge in person. Whether the date be 334 or 335 is, however, unimportant in comparison with the evidence afforded as to the kind of event which gave rise to the charges constantly being made against the Bishop. The letter reads as follows:-(1)

"To my beloved brother, Apa Paf³ou and Patabeit priests, Callistus greeting in the Lord God. We wish you to know the events which have occurred here; for you heard at the time what we suffered that night at the house of Heraclius⁽²⁾, the recorder. For there were also certain brethren of them that came to you with us in the house and they can themselves inform you of what occurred. Well, after that day on the twenty-fourth of Pachon⁽³⁾, Isaac the Bishop of Lentopolis came to Heraiscus⁽⁴⁾ at Alexandria and he desired to dine with the Bishop in the Camp. So the adherents of Athanasius, hearing of it, came bringing with them soldiers of the Dux and of the Camp; they came in a drunken state at the ninth hour, having shut the Camp wishing to seize both him and the brethren. So certain soldiers who were in the Camp and had the fear of God in their hearts, hearing of it took them and hid them in the store-chambers of the Camp; and when they could not be found they went out and found four brethren coming into the Camp, and they beat them and made them all bloody so that they were in danger of death and cast

(1) The translation is Mr Bell's. (2) Cf. Athan. Hist. Arian. 48. (3) A bishop in the list of Melitians handed to Alexander. (4) Otherwise unknown.

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them forth outside Nicopolis. After they had cast them forth, they departed again to the Gate of the Sun to the hostel in which the brethren are entertained, and they seized five others there and confined them in the Camp in the evening; and they shut them up till the prepositus came out of the guard-room towards morning; and the prepositus and the scribe took them and ordered them to be cast forth out of Nicopolis; and Heracleides, the keeper of the hostel, they bound and maltreated, threatening and enjoining him; "For what reason did you admit the monks of the Meletian party into the hostel." Another brother, Ammon, who was in the Camp and himself receives the brethren, they shut up in the Camp forbidding him to receive monks in his house. For there is no other brother but those two who receives the brethren. They made them play the coward. So we are greatly afflicted being separated by them each in his own place; and so we are troubled that they will not suffer us to depart to the Papas Heraiscus and visit him; for on the night in which the brethren were maltreated, the prepositus of the soldiers sent a report to the Bishop saying, "I sinned and was drunken in the night in that I maltreated the brethren." And that day he had a service said though he is a Gentile on account of the sin which he committed. Athanasius is very despondent and on his side he causes us distress by reason of his writings and the reports which come to him from abroad, since the Emperor having found Macarius at Court to yrus writing that having bound him and he should in order that So Archelans the and ... having departed with Athanasius, son of Capito, wishing to carry off Macarius, the report came to Apa John at Antioch; he came and seized them and put them under arrest because they had written vile slanders against Heraiscus, and Archelaus himself took the letters abroad. It was God who sent the three of them abroad.

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So Athanasius heard this news and is very despondent. Often(?) did they come for him, but till now he has not left the country; but he had his baggage embarked at sea as though he would leave the country, and then again he took his baggage off the ship, not wishing to leave the country I have written to you in order that you might know in what affliction we are; for he carried off a Bishop of the lower country and shut him in the meat-market and a priest of the same region he shut in the lock-up, and a deacon in the principal prison, and till the twenty-eighth of Pachon, Heraiscus too was confined in the Camp. I thank God, our Master, that the scourgings which he endured have ceased, and on the twenty-seventh he caused seven bishops to leave the country, Emes and Peter are of their number, the son of Toubestis. Do not neglect us then since they left behind the bread in order that it might not be taken outside on account of the Bishop, to the intent that he may keep it by him. For when buying loaves for our sustenance I bought at 14 talents the artaba of wheat. As soon therefore as you find a competent person, send me a few loaves." (The letter ends with personal greetings.)

If Mr. Bell is correct in dating these events ~~at the later date~~ just previous to the Synod of Tyre, at which date we on the contrary seem to detect a more pacific note in Athanasius' policy, how much more might he before the warning of Caesarea be guilty of violence in his episcopal rule. These are a formidable list of high-handed actions even if we exclude him from complicity in the first incident. It becomes easy to believe that the Callinicus of Sozomen's report was harshly treated, and we note the silence of Athanasius upon this subject. He concentrates his energies upon the case of Arsenius, and his opponents made the tactical error of doing the like. Athanasius while delaying his answer to the summons,

sent out Presbyters to search for Arsenius, and at last received the welcome news that he had been discovered. The man was alive and well and soon a sworn statement to that effect was on its way ^{to the Bishop} ~~to him~~. Such a proof he now saw might serve to squash all the proceedings. He forwarded it to the Emperor himself and reminded him that he had heard of Ischyrras before. The Emperor ended the case. His letter to this effect, ⁽²⁾ ~~the Alexandrian preserved, according to his careful custom,~~ ^{according to his careful custom,} ~~ing to his careful custom.~~ ^{case} The ~~plot~~ ^{case} had failed stupidly, and in consequence, Constantine made it plain in this letter that such accusations were defamatory libels, and, if persisted in, would be treated as such by him, not according to ecclesiastical procedure, but by criminal law.

Nevertheless his first word of exhortation to Athanasius was that he should endeavour to restore the people of God to tranquility and merciful feelings. The Bishop apparently, if we are right in dating the letter above quoted at the earlier period, ⁽³⁾ responded to the request and with excellent results. Though they are ~~not so~~ ^{vaguely} tabulated ⁱⁿ his records, we ~~may~~ ^{must} date at this time the flow of apologies, and requests for admission to communion, which came to him from former opponents, from Ischyrras, from Arsenius, and from John, the Archaph, the last a prime mover in these accusations and Melitius' successor as head of the schism. The Emperor's action had been effective; but we see the easiness wherewith he could be won to favour by anyone who adopted conciliatory tactics. John, the Archaph, chiefly threatened by those hints of criminal procedure, because of his repentant attitude and humble request to Athanasius for re-admission to communion, completely won the ⁽³⁾ imperial goodwill, and received letters to visit the Emperor and receive in person tokens of favour.

Athanasius showed here that when recantation was made

(1) See Athan. Apol. agt Arians. § 67. (2) In ibid. § 68.

(3) Mr Bell notes that two dates are possible for this letter, of Callistus, i.e. prior to "Cesarea" or prior to Tyre. He prefers the latter on evidence connected with the fragments of sentences in the middle about Macarius etc. But Athan. gives the air of a peaceful state of affairs after "Cesarea" and his accusations at Tyre were all the old ones, with no such additions as the situation of Callistus' letter might have afforded.

he too could be magnanimous. Nevertheless we do not err or malign his memory if we consider that his uncompromising hostility to heresy and to every deviation from the strict code of Christian faith and morals, was an important factor in the history of these events. Clerics, so far as he represented them, and he was by no means alone in this, were not easily swayed this way and that. They had a clear perception of the testimony which the Church was called to give in the world and they gave it.

The character of Athanasius becomes plainer than ever before in the light of this new evidence. One cannot agree with Deissman that he is revealed as "a shiftless and irresolute man".⁽¹⁾ His hesitation to obey his summons until he knew of the fate of Arsenius was rather that tactical delay which Gibbon calls it. His severity is plain, however, and also his use of secular force to secure ecclesiastical unity. *while deploring the violence we* cannot but admire the courage which maintained an uncompromising attitude in this situation. There was no belated attempt to make peace. The same rigid austerity continued even under the shadow of the charge of murder. He was, we see, the great figure dominating the horizon of his opponents in their private communications to each other. Callistus, of course, may exaggerate his actions, but he had no motive in this letter to state anything but what he believed true. The protagonist of Homöousianism was thus terrible in his deeds, terrible in his words to those who thought differently from him, a giant in power and especially an obstacle to the Eusebian Peace-party. We see his limitations in his own controversial writings, his too ready supposition that ~~everything~~ and everybody who works against him is actuated by Arian leanings or by personal spite. We see how he might win the most intense dislike and hatred, but we also see a champion of

(1) So Article Deissmann "Athanasiana" Expository Times 1924.

Church-freedom well matched for his formidable opponents. ^P We find, however, apart from the use of secular force, evidence that undue emphasis upon doctrinal correctness tended to ^{obscure} ~~observe~~ the purity of Christian Ethic. The attitude of Athanasius to the case of Eustathius is a case in point. Did he think the charge against the cleric a gross libel beneath mention? If so, was that attitude a proper excuse for silence when a Court found the case proven? Do we not see a tendency here to call false judgment a sin, and to ^{questions of morality in cases} ~~ignore~~ ~~exculpate immorality, or be hard to persuade that immorality exists,~~ where orthodoxy is established. There was that amount of right upon the side of the Disciplinarian or Broad party, that fellowship in "doing the will" is more important than uniformity of belief. ⁽¹⁾ ~~Also in combating such tendencies to mere philosophising regarding the philosophy of the world the Church received a certain the faith as Arius represented, the Church in her turn received a certain amount of the dogmatism of the schools into herself. In seeking to She tended to attribute to the divine preserve her faith, from the secular rationalization of the world, the Church, under her leaders of this period attributed to the divine means whereby truth is known, something of the ~~h~~ formalism of current intellectual studies. Her thinkers intellectual means of comprehension ^{hardened} ~~hardened~~ faith into creed, if we may so put it. When we turn to the Orations of Athanasius wherein he defended the orthodox principle, we see at once his method is that of quotation from Scripture. Arius had argued, had used the principles of worldly discovery of truth, as is ^{manifest} ~~evident~~ from the first letter addressed by the Arians to Alexander, from the Thalia, and from our other evidence. Athanasius does not appear to reason but to appeal to what has been taught, to Scripture and to the accepted ^{position} ~~teaching~~ of the Church. ~~and~~ ^{lay} ~~Therein lies~~ his strength, and the proof of the Church's power still to rule her own province ^{of inspiration.} At the same time, however, the conquered give laws to the victors, and, at this period, Church faith received a great forward urge towards that attitude of mind which makes her~~

(1) Dr Gore The Holy Spirit and the Church p. 175 ff. shows evidence of considerable "breadth" in Theology in other respects than the Christological. This supports our argument of the previous chapter that an external menace gave the heat of panic to the Church upon this subject.

use inspired utterances ~~like~~ as if they were crystallised, clear-cut definitions often as fond of shibboleths, as uncompromising on small intellectual and judgmental points, and as wooden in her manner of viewing the Universe as the wooden manner, but the expressions of religious faith and experience which effete schools, whose methods she then combated. Athanasius the Church handled were even less adapted for such pretended exercises of the intellect. To Athanasius is due the credit of establishing that faith was the Spirit's creation, but yet, in the stress of debate, he emphasised Church's own realm and the Spirit's creation, nevertheless at times he so emphasised proof-text and tradition, so that subtler, and yet more vital elements in the apprehension of ^{religious truth} ~~faith~~ slipped out of notice. The intuitive and experiential data of Christian belief, though prized, we may believe, by him, the friend of St. Anthony, did not appear in his writings to such an extent as ^{as what may be called purely formally} ~~might keep them in prominence, equally~~ ^{dogmatic proofs of his Trinitarian position. dogma.} ~~with his clear definitions of Trinitarian truth.~~

If Constantine approved at first of such action as Athanasius had taken against Ischyrras, and other dissentients to the rule of the Catholic Church, it soon became evident that such means were powerless to maintain peace and unity. If Athanasius had adopted more conciliatory tactics after Caesarea, he was unable to maintain them, or previous troubles lingered in the memory. It was apparently represented to the Emperor that it was entirely the fault of this cleric, that every individual in Egypt was not joined to the Church. A serious invasion of Northern neighbours had been fully occupying his attention, but now when a settlement had been made on advantageous, yet generous terms, when the congratulations of Aethiopia, Persia, and India were flowing to him on account of his victories, he had leisure and, no doubt, keen desire, to see peace firmly established at home. The time of his thirtieth anniversary was drawing near, and perhaps he had already planned that a great Synod like that of Nicaea should signalise this event, when too, the great Church built by him at Jerusalem was to be dedicated. The moment seemed a most propitious one for putting as end to the troubles in Egypt.

(1) Sogomen II. 25. (2) The Goths and Sarmatians. These wars lasted from 331 - 334 A.D.

(1)
In the interval of thirty months, between the Synod of Caesarea at which Athanasius had declined to appear, and the date of the Synod of Tyre ^{335-6 A.D.} to which he was now summoned, the Emperor's feelings seem to have changed very considerably. Then he had quashed all proceedings with severe threats and had urged harmony. John, the Archaph, had thereafter, however, been impressive in his conciliatory manner, and the conviction may have been aroused that only Athanasius was the cause of dispeace. The tone of ^{the Emperor's} ~~his~~ letter (2) to him now at least was peremptory. He was ordered to proceed to this Council at Tyre without delay, and there submit to a full examination of his case. He dared not disobey. His Presbyter, Macarius, was taken away in chains. Count Dionysius was commissioned to preside at the Council, and a great show of military force was in evidence. Athanasius was not dismayed, but he took with him so large a retinue of clerics and servants, that the other party, though supported by the military, complained of his attempts to overawe them.

(3)
A letter of Constantine was read to the assembled bishops. It spoke of the happy political settlement in the Empire. "In the general prosperity", the Emperor had written, "which distinguishes this period, it seems right that the Catholic Church should be exempt from trouble." There was a pointed reference "to individuals instigated by the love of contention, who endeavoured to excite disorders in a way inconsistent with their profession", and a statement that the purpose of the Council would be ^{to} "restore concord to provinces thrown into dissension by the arrogance of a few men." ^{Count} ~~Count~~ Dionysius was named as responsible for all good order, a point, ^{it} ~~be~~ noted by the way, in the settlement of the question as to the duties of a King's Commissioner at ecclesiastical assemblies. "I have also sent Dionysius, one of the consuls, to remind those who are to sit in council with you, of their duty to be zealous in the maintenance of

(1) Sozomen is authority for the time. Official documents speak of Tyre as 'a year ago, probably a rough estimate of time. (2) Apol. agt Arian. #71. (3) Theodor. I. 29.

good order in everything that is transacted. If anyone should dare to disobey our command, and refuse to come to the Council, which, however, I do not think possible, we must send him into immediate banishment, that he may learn not to oppose the decrees enacted by the Emperor, for the support of truth. (S) All that now devolves upon your holiness is to judge without partiality or prejudice, to obey the ecclesiastical and apostolical canons, and to devise suitable remedies for the evil which has resulted from error, in order that the Church may be freed from all reproach, that my anxiety may be diminished, that peace may be restored, and that your renown may be increased."

Their ability to judge without partiality or prejudice was, however, very much a matter of question. Ischyrras was present as a Presbyter, to which Athanasius objected. He might have withdrawn indeed upon this point, but "there was the Count", he says, "ready to use compulsion and soldiers hurried us about."

Dramatic stories are told of the trial. There is the well-known story of the vehement accusation made by a female (H) witness against one of the clerics, who seemed to her active enough, and concerned enough in the matter, to be Athanasius; and of the consternation, which overwhelmed her and those who had produced her as evidence, when she found him to be quite a different person, ~~from him on whom she wished to fix guilt.~~ The story of the murder of Arsenius was told again, and also it was related how Athanasius had cut off the wretched man's hand to conjure with, and kept it embalmed in a box. The box was exhibited and also the hand, amid cries of horror. Athanasius had also his exhibits - namely Arsenius alive and well. He threw back the folds of his cloak and displayed his hands. "No man has ever received more than two hands from his Creator", he cried in triumph.

These are good stories. The first however is told of too
(1) many bishops. As for the other, reported dramatic incidents of
the police courts down to this day repeat the type. Athanasius
who had an eye to effect would have related these events if they had
occurred. He took Arsenius with him, however, and his presence
would be sufficient to answer one accusation. What was said about
Callinicus is left in silence. On the question of Ischyrras, they
(2) concentrated their forces. They deemed it advisable to collect
further information on this head, and persuaded Dionysius to appoint
a commission to visit Alexandria and gather evidence. The point
of the accusation was against Macarius, the Presbyter, who, it will
be remembered, was the Bishop's agent in dealing with the sectary.
Athanasius indeed with all his proofs collected, was forced to chafe
under the intolerable situation of not being attacked. He protested
against the commission, first on the ground of ~~superfluousness~~ ^{that it was superfluous;} and
next on that of its personnel, for they were all of one party, and
the suspected persons were not to be allowed to accompany them. To
Alexandria, however, they went, and the clergy of Athanasius there
~~wrote protests~~ ^{wrote protests} against their coming. Athanasius had taken with him to
Tyre a very considerable proportion of his staff. He had been
accused indeed, of so exceeding what was necessary, as to menace
the impartiality of the deliberations. By the adroit move of sending
a commission to Alexandria, these were now far from the scene of
action. They, however, were not content to be idle, ~~and~~ ^{but} wrote
vigorous letters to the Council, to Count Dionysius, and others
representing that the Commissioners had only repaired to Alexandria
to conspire against them in their absence, and that they were victims
of underhand dealing. Their protests were so far effective as to
secure in reply, a letter, from the Bishop of Thessalonica to the
Count Dionysius, and, as this ecclesiastic had great weight with the

(1) E.g. Chilostrorgius II. 11 relates it of another bishop. (2) Athanasius does so
at least. Apol. agst Ariam p 71 ff.

the Count, he protested to Flacillus, the president of the Council, that grave irregularity had taken place. He had already impressed upon them that the commission must be elected by a general vote, he said, and that accuser and defender must both be represented. Whether he had done so or not, he was now plainly alarmed lest their ex parte proceedings might be reported to the Emperor. Athanasius and his clergy had withdrawn from the Council, after having uttered their protest.

Meanwhile the Commission was finding no scarcity of evidence in Alexandria. Jews and heathen offered themselves as eager witnesses. Catechumens spoke on matters outside of their knowledge. Generally, as we might suppose the whole populace were stirred up to supply the investigators with information. Athanasius obtained afterwards the written evidence of the Commission, and made merry over it at the expense of his accusers. The Mareotis, in which the trouble took rise, ^{was} ~~is~~ a district of Alexandria, which was too sparsely inhabited to have a bishop. The village, or hamlet, where Ischyra had his home was too small to have even a Presbyter allotted to it. The man himself was a contentious person who could persuade only seven individuals to join his communion. His own relatives who lived in the village would have nothing to do with him. A large commission was trying now to find out, amid heated opposition ^{from} ~~of~~ the excited Christian populace, about an incident which had occurred four or five years previously. There was rioting even to blood-letting, but, as we might expect, truth could not easily be found.

Their task completed or at least put an end to, the Commission returned. Athanasius and his party had withdrawn. He was therefore solemnly deposed, and the Synod was proceeding to the examination of Marcellus of Ancyra and other clerics, when arrived this unexpected letter; - "Victor Constantine Maximus Augustus to the Bishops assembled at Tyre, I know not what the decisions are

(1) Preserved Apol. contr Arian § 86.

which you have arrived at in your Council amidst noise and tumult. Truth seems, however, to have been distorted by disorderly irregularities, and, because of your railing at one another which you will continue, (~~ἡ~~ ἀγῆτορ εἶναι βούλεσθε) you cannot agree to see what is pleasing to God. However God's Providence will have the work, both of dispersing the evils, which plainly spring from this contentious spirit, and of revealing to us whether you have had any regard to truth while you were gathered there, and whether your judgments were free from favour and enmity. Wherefore with all speed, all of you, repair together here to me, such is my will, that an exact account of your doings may be rendered by you. Why I decided to write to you and summon you to me by letter you may learn from what follows:- I was entering lately my namesake and happy home-city of Constantinople, (I happened to be on horseback at the time), when suddenly Athanasius, the Bishop, was in the middle of the road before me, with certain others whom he had with him, approaching with such unexpectedness as to give me the utmost surprise. All-knowing God is my witness that I should not have known him at first sight, unless some of my attendants had told me. When he requested to be heard I refused and all but ordered his removal. He asked, however, with much boldness nothing more than that you should come here, in order that in your presence he might complain of his ill-usage. Since that seemed to me reasonable and fitting to the opportunity, I agreed to order this letter to be written to you in order that as many of you as make up the Synod of Tyre, may hasten without delay to my Court, and show by the facts themselves the purity and dis-interestness of your judgment. This I say you must do before me, whom not even you will deny to be a true servant of God."

This letter arrived to the consternation of the parties who

recognised that appeal had been made to Caesar. While they had been collecting foolish evidence in the Mareotis, their great opponent had been holding colloquy with the Emperor. To Constantinople now they must repair with the disquieting knowledge that Athanasius had anticipated them at Court. They so far disobeyed the Emperor's command, however, as not to adjourn hither in full strength, but sent a deputation. Eusebius selected five colleagues, like-minded with himself, for this purpose. They were able to prepare another accusation upon the journey, namely, that Anthanasius had threatened that he would cause the corn which was sent from Alexandria to be withheld from the "happy home-city" of the Emperor. Arriving at court they presented this charge before a Council, consisting of themselves and five other bishops, and when the Emperor heard it he was so incensed, that, without giving time for any defence, he forthwith banished Anthanasius into Gaul. This was conduct so much at variance with his usual strong sense of justice, that we can see how sorely his temper had been tried by these disputes. There was, however, a decree against impudent appeal to the Emperor, with a penalty of banishment, of which he may have made use.⁽¹⁾ The triumph of the other party, however, was not complete, since John, the Archaph, was banished also. The policy of rooting out the persons "instigated by the love of contention" might seem to be fulfilled.

The next proceeding of the Council at Constantinople A.D. 335 was to recall Arius. The Emperor said he would accept him if he gave satisfactory evidence of accepting the faith. He, accordingly, produced a document superficially indentical with the faith of Nicaea, and Constantine expressed himself satisfied and ordered that he should be received. The man was in a very weak state of health, and Eusebius of Nicomedia acted foolishly in

(1) See Migne p. 357.

arranging that his return should partake of the nature of a public triumph. Alexander, the aged bishop of Constantinople, was so strongly exercised by the prospect of having to receive the heretic that he spent the night in vigil. The general public thought it an answer to the old man's prayers when, on his way to the reception, Arius had a violent seizure, but all were horrified when in a few moments the arch-heretic died by the wayside in the public lavatory to which he had been carried. Superstition attributed his end to his false creed which he had signed, but indeed it was much more due to his long exile. Such a death at such a moment of excitement, may cause pity today. Rationalizing in theology may be unspiritual, but it is not criminal. ~~It~~ was weak no doubt to sign for Constantine the ambiguous document of faith, but the man had strong inducements and many advisers to this course. For conscience' sake he had stood out for long, as compared with his episcopal partners. We may deplore the times when men were tempted to temporize with truth as they saw it. Exile is not a legitimate weapon of the Church. She must pronounce what belongs to her revealed truth and what does not. She may on occasion declare that some beliefs mark men as outside her holy fellowship. The State, however, giving its aid, ever tends to add something more than mere withdrawal of Church privileges, ^{a punishment} which does not even need to carry with it any social penalty. What she adds is usually offered in the name of peace, but it breeds enmity and prolongs strife. Thus Arius lay dead, and Athanasius was in exile.

The bishops continued their proceedings until summoned to the great Council at Jerusalem, which was at once to dedicate the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to signalize the thirtieth anniversary of the God-led Emperor, and proclaim the complete unity of the Catholic Church. Their proceedings might well be calm and unanimous,

for after they had cast out Marcellas of Ancyra, who protested still against the treatment of Athanasius, they were nearly all of one party (1) They passed then a decree which contrasts with that of Nicaea. It is addressed to the Churches of Alexandria and to all bishops through the world. It states that to those assembled to consecrate the great Church at Jerusalem, God's grace had given great thankfulness and joy. Further cause of congratulation it avers had been afforded to them by the Emperor stirring them up to put away all malice, and to receive with single and peaceable minds the Arians whom envy had excluded from the Church of God; also the Emperor had testified to the correctness of their faith. If we may judge fairly from this short abstract from their proceedings, the whole driving force of the Council of Jerusalem was the most religious Emperor. He had his way of peace at last. He might think that he had retrieved his error at Nicaea. At all events, it may have seemed good comfort to him to find the clerics so much in the mood to accept his judgment upon all points, while he failed to note that a supine, backboneless Church was not the weapon which, at the beginning of his reign, he had lifted to effect his aims of imperial consolidation. Nevertheless peace was the keynote of his thirtieth anniversary. Eusebius gave the address at the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which like the new Jerusalem stood outside the walls of the old. The Emperor, victorious in war, supreme lord of the world, favoured of Heaven, heard his laudations with satisfaction. What he had achieved in thirty years was wonderful, but even Emperor-Apostles are mortal. As his schemes faced the problems of succession, they met everywhere with impossible situations. The Church, however, passes on through the generations of men, and therein lies her ~~in~~ ^{unconquerable} ~~indestructible~~ power.

(1) Preserved Athanasius. Apol. agt Arian. § 84.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DEATH OF CONSTANTINE.



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The death of Constantine fell in 337 A.D., the year following his celebration of his thirtieth anniversary. When near his end, he sought the rite of baptism. His letter requesting this sacrament contained the words ⁽¹⁾ "Let there be an end of all duplicity" - ~~which~~ which may denote, considering the fact that he had already given ample proof of having thrown aside all leanings to heathenism, that he was aware of a certain insincerity in his previous relations to the Christian faith. He had never been a catechumen, but a very short period of probation was now found to suffice for one who had been called by certain of the ecclesiastics "taught of God". So, clad in the white robes of a neophyte, he passed away at Ancyra, saying, it was reported, that he felt assured of being accounted worthy of immortality, and of partaking in celestial light. His death caused universal mourning. The pagan section of his subjects defied him at once ⁽²⁾, but his Christian canonisation did not come until a very much later period, and was then only recognised in the East.

In estimating his character, we do not require to believe all the laudations of his hero-worshippers, to realise that the temper and results of his rule were such as might easily put him in a very high place morally, and mentally, among those who have held his office. He was a great man, and though that especially in the way of effecting his own personal plans ⁽³⁾, yet under him the Empire enjoyed a singular degree of peace at home, and very highly increased prestige without its borders. His ambition and extravagance were obvious faults. His insult to Rome, involved in the building of a new capital, gave him a high degree of unpopularity with his western subjects, which was farther increased among the pagans by his attachment to the suspected faith of the Nazarene.

(1) Euseb. V.C. IV. 62. (2) Eutropius: - inter divos meruit referri
X. 8

(3) Eutropius X. 5. Vir ingens et omnia efficere nitens quae animo fingerasset.

It is plain that Zosimus, for example, as a historian, is as prejudiced against him as any Ecclesiastical writer is in his favour. Aurelius Victor and Eutropius, although much more fair, collect with satisfaction incidents and characteristics, which prevent us from following blindly the writers who thought him without fault. We learn thus to think of him as greedy of praise to an extraordinary degree.⁽¹⁾ We recognise the foible of jealousy in the gibe whereby he called Trajan "Wall-Moss",⁽²⁾ not relishing the many inscriptions of that Emperor's name upon public buildings. We have information of his fondness for display in dress, and of his extravagance, which made the people liken him to a proverbial orphan-heir set free of his guardians. We are told that his humour was rather cynical than pleasing.⁽³⁾ It may be however, that the last statement refers not to Constantine at all, but is a sententious dictum on the value of evidence from mockers, as compared with flatterers. We may accept the dictum so, and dismissing the evidence of Christian historians trust only to what the heathen writers say of him. We still extract the truth that he had very many excellent qualities of mind and body, was bountiful to his friends, and on the whole humane to his enemies. He was successful in war; and we shall count his magnanimous peace-settlement with the Goths to his credit, and not as detracting from his fame as a general.⁽⁴⁾

Even in civil wars his settlement with his foes, contrasts with the policy of universal slaughter of some of his predecessors. The outstanding blot upon his name is the death of his son Crispus, and the fate of his nephew Licinianus. These crimes, if such they were, have already been discussed. We have to remember that they stand against a background of Imperial crime which is most unbelievable. It was the fate of the Emperors to

(1) Eutrop. loc. cit. supra, and Aurel. Victor de V. + M. Imperator. Xli.

(2) herba parietaria. (Aurel. Victor. loc. cit.).

(3) Drisor plus quam Gladius. (loc. cit.)

(4) Eutropius (X.4) appears to despise him for his magnanimity.

be conspired against, and usually by those of their own household. Between murder and self-protection on the part of an absolute ruler, is but a short step. We would require much more evidence than we have at present, before we dared pronounce Constantine free from a vice which had always characterised the Roman throne.

Decimation, ^{however} as Macaulay says somewhere, is a convenient form of military punishment, but we cannot select one man to bear the sins ^{almost} of ^{all} who had ~~held~~ held his office. Constantine might have been expected as a Christian to be free from the suspicions of a Tiberius, and the bloodthirst of a Nero. It is proved beyond cavil that his general humanity was a fact. His was not a reign in which informers found encouragement for their disgraceful trade. An impartial writer tells us that he suppressed calumnies with severe laws, an enactment which Tacitus would have emphasised rather more than his literary descendants seem to think worth their while. Admitting, as it would seem we must, that his clemency and fairness were apt to give way when his imperial prerogative was endangered, yet we may say, that, as in most things, a mild ruler, as a patron of the arts and an encourager of morality, as no saint, yet a man who made some fight against his vices, ⁽¹⁾ he may compare favourably with the best morally, who had ever hitherto occupied his throne.

To review his character as a Christian is to judge him from a very different standpoint. As heathen historians, according to their own ideals are too harsh, so Ecclesiastical writers, with their higher enlightenment, are found guilty of the grossest flattery. It might be too severe to say that the greatest credit which he may earn in the impartial eyes of Christianity to-day, will be found in his long postponement of the rite of baptism. There indeed he showed his acute preception, that there was a strong incompatibility between profession of the Christian faith,

(1) Julian says he fought against gluttony in the "Caesars", if that farcical type of production can be accepted as evidence.

and his worldly schemes. After being baptised, we are told, he never lifted the insignia of his rank again. We have to recognise, of course, that he was Roman in his conception of religion, and that he thoroughly believed in himself as patron of the faith, and ^{as} God's instrument for its defence and advancement. We may put aside the idea that he was a mere political schemer, who, with his tongue in his cheek, sought to be all things to all men for his own ambitious purposes. He could not separate his own consolidation on the throne from the efficiency of State and Church. The Church in his view had as its great purpose to teach morality, and to make the Deity propitious to Rome. After the characteristic manner of Roman government, he recognised the authority of its self-governing courts, but in the same way he naturally was ready to assume headship even over a body whose faith and practice, he even felt it would be presumptuous to profess. He knew enough of Christianity to avoid claiming a kindred position in her midst to that of Pontifex Maximus, except by suggestion, ~~and~~ by surrounding with mystery his championship of the faith, by assuming great piety, and by alleging that miracles marked him as a favourite of Heaven. It is, however, just this degree of perception, which militates against taking a high view of his character, for he knew enough to understand that the faith was no impersonal Roman cult, but one which could not be thirled to any political institution, or to the support of one individual in supreme power.

In the early part of his reign it is possible that he recognised the value, in Christianity, of no more than its monotheism, and may even have believed it possible to establish a universal faith, of a sort which would combine Christianity and pagan higher philosophy in one. Latterly, from the date of his victory over Licinius, we may believe that not only from policy but from conviction, he adopted entirely the Christian faith.

He studied the Apologists. He was impressed with the fact that Vergil had foretold a Messianic kingdom, and that the oracles of the Sybil contained foreshadowings of Christ.⁽¹⁾ It was no hypocrite who composed the "Oration to the Saints" which has been handed down to us as the learned Emperor's work. Unless a Court Chaplain, such as Eusebius, wrote it for him, Constantine must be credited for its sake with a fair amount of spiritual insight. A few quotations may suffice to illustrate its tone.

"The only power in man which can be elevated to a comparison with that of God, is sincere and guiltless service, and devotion of heart to Himself, with the contemplation and study of whatever pleases Him, the raising of our affections above the things of earth, and directing our thoughts as far as we may to high and heavenly objects".

"Compare our religion with yours (Heathen). Is there not with us genuine concord and unwearied love to others? If we reprove a fault is not our object not to destroy but to admonish; or correction for salvation, not for cruelty? Do we not exercise not only sincere faith toward God, but fidelity in the relations of the social life?⁽²⁾ Do we not pity the unfortunate? Is not ours a life of simplicity which disdains to cover evil beneath the mask of fraud and hypocrisy?

Calculating, ambitious, lacking in sincerity, far-seeing for his own ends, inordinately fond of praise, extravagant with public moneys, fierce on occasion, when anything threatened his vanity, his sole dominion, or his sense of order, he was genuinely affected to modesty and reverence by the very sight of some of the aged confessors of the faith, willing to be advised by such men, ^{and} anxious to win their approbation in all that he did. He was temperamentally inclined to humanity, and generally in love with the Christian ideals of peace and goodwill. He was no philosopher like Marcus Aurelius. He probably never understood what the theologians were disputing about to the very end. He was no mystic in religion, but admired Christianity's practical ethic. He was, moreover, not a little superstitious, but it marks his unbounded

(1) Oration to the Saints. This was not of course an original idea.

(2) His own freedom from sensual sin was remarkable in the traditions of the Emperors.

confidence that he was not overawed to think of himself as the God-elected Emperor. He was no Stoic who kept an unmoved face amid wonders, like his son. Men saw his tears, and his emotions were unrestrained in his letters.⁽¹⁾ Against the background, in which he emerges, in that company of tyrants and mere self-seekers, even beside that Aurelius, whose precepts and wisdom are so admirable, but who must bear the guilt of persecuting in a cruel way the most spiritually and morally enlightened of his subjects, he stands out as a man, very human indeed, and by no means free from the vices which had become characteristic of the emperors, but not altogether unworthy of the place which he holds as the first Christian on the throne of the Caesars.

In reviewing the effects which Constantine's policy had had upon the Church we must note that the question of imperial sovereignty within her was really, in view of the history of the Roman Emperor's^s divine assumptions, the most vital of all. We have sought to bring out what might be regarded as the psychological idea lying behind Constantine's repeated emphasis upon his divinely appointed championship of the faith, his stories of miraculous occurrences, his assumption of an extreme piety and his representation of himself on his coinage with uplifted head. States in themselves are religious in origin or at least they ever come down with the sanctions of divine favour clinging to them. It is natural therefore to them to take the care of religion to themselves. For their governing task they require it, and as we have shown the Roman rule was peculiarly, almost exaggeratedly, possessed by this thought. Constantine thus almost inevitably would have exercised influence to absorb Christianity into the system of Empire, whatever his own personal feeling had been. As it was his ambition made him do this in a very high degree, even while his private

(1) I. q. "Cessent jam rapaces officialium manus, cessent inquam" Solist 331A.2
(Augustine p. 363.)

conception of the Faith made him think discipleship and the purple incompatible. He passed from the idea of Christianity as one cult of two, to that of it as the main sanction and power behind the throne, exalted himself to supreme government of it in a throne higher than a bishops, and would have had the clerics his officials and governors, one with each other and looking to him as an essential and central part of the divine hierarchy. It is reported that at his tricennalia he was hailed by a bishop as fortunate having reigned over the whole world on earth and being destined to reign with Christ in the Kingdom of Heaven.⁽¹⁾ We are told that he rebuked this flattery. Nevertheless it is more or less evident that such an impression of his destiny was that which he ever sought to give. We see that one Churchman at least would have surrendered to him and ~~as to all of his office~~ ^{thus almost inevitably to all his successors} such an apostolic place in the hierarchy, but he did not venture to test the complacency of the general body of Christians in this respect. The reason why a Christianised modification of the old principle of Caesar-god-head was never formulated ^{was} ~~is~~, we believe, that at the very ^{remote suggestion} ~~touch~~ of such an idea, ~~silent and remote~~, the Church, as if in the frenzy of a blind fear, was found shouting down both friend and foe in proclaiming the Godhead of the Crucified Nazarene. Many have wondered that Homoousian and anti-Sabellian contests should engage the interest not only of clerics and theologians but of mobs, of women and of slaves, but who but these, with the sensitive perception of long suffering, could so well detect the menace behind events, although it only as yet was discernible far off. Was it to be the hardening for ever of things as they were, with the few ameliorations that might be effected, or the glorious vista of hope unending? A few reforms and then conservatism in the cast-iron rule of Roman system, or Christ's Kingdom, as he *had*

(1) Euseb. V. C. IV. 48.

promised, ever growing and expanding? The Emperor was slowly preparing himself a place between Heaven and earth, but they let him know by unparalleled clamour, before ever he thought of stepping up thither, that it was filled already, by no Emperor or Emperor's man, but by the ~~R~~epresentative of all ~~H~~umanity.

It is well to pause and consider the significance of this, for many historians forget this signal victory of the Church. They forget that she met not a Christian State or a King who accepted merely the idea of the divine right of Kings, but a State which took divinity to herself, and an ~~E~~mp^eror who claimed outside of Christian affairs to be a god, and by more than half his subjects was still so acclaimed. We cannot doubt the vivility or loyalty of those Christians who had fought that idea from without, and who now effectively silenced it within, and ^{who} ~~^~~were even yet more boldly, in East and West, to declare that what assumptions had been allowed to Constantine out of surprise and gratitude, would not be tolerated in his successors.

The Church, however, succeeded not merely in resisting the supremacy which the age-long deification of the emperors might have made easy of attainment, she established even during this period of peculiar domination of the civil power, certain ^{visible} ~~important~~ ^{embodiments} ~~parts~~ of her own sovereignty. Two important ^{actions} ~~gifts to the Church~~ of Constantine were destined to defeat his aims for imperial ascendancy over ^{the Church.} ~~her, namely Rome and Nicæa.~~ In changing his capital to the Bosphorus, he left the ancient seat of power still clad with all the ^{prestige} ~~history~~ of the past. Silently, throughout ^{the latter part of} ~~^~~his reign, this had been having the effect of making the Roman bishop more widely influential and powerful. His See held a place of political authority and had furthermore apostolic traditions. In the immediate future the consequences would emerge and the

prestige of Rome and especially of its ^{Bishop} ~~cleric~~ excite the jealousy of Constantine's successor. Even now, however, the organisation of the Church on parallel lines to that of the Empire with the development of powerful metropolitans and super-metropolitans had had visible results. Athanasius had been banished for no religious offence but for one scarcely believable ^{by us in these days} to have been at all within the power of any cleric. Potent political influence of every kind was wielded by these Churchmen of high rank, who governed great areas. If a Decius had feared a bishop in time gone by, in the future it must be reckoned that they were among the most powerful ranks in the Empire.

Further if at Nicaea Constantine had thought to establish his own sovereignty he had only succeeded in making the Church conscious of her own. Cohesion and unanimity from East to West was all that was required to make the Church so potent that she would dominate the Empire. He had gone far to give her these gifts. He had at least made her realise her wide dominion as coextensive with his own. If the findings at Nicaea had not proved entirely acceptable in all parts, the principle of Synodical authority had at least been established. Thus in the teeth of unlimited display of civil supremacy the Church with imperial help built up the organisation which might express her own sovereignty. The crown-right of Christ might come to be symbolised at such Synods in a manner which left no room for prince or people to do anything else but bow down to them. Thus with the double instrument of ^{the} High Metropolitan and ^{the} Synod the Church was, by the end of Constantine's reign, armed strongly to resist even the most subtle and persistent efforts to dominate her.

We may note, however, as important the precedent established for the presence of the Civil Magistrate or his representative at Synods, and ^{the definition of his duties given} ~~his duties as defined~~ by Constantine as ^{that} ~~that~~ of

seeing that all things were done legally and in order. Significant was the appeal made on this point at Tyre to Dionysius and then to the Emperor himself, showing an acknowledgment of the right of the State to superintend these assemblies in the interests of fairness and equity, and indeed of the value from the Church's point of view of such outside supervision. A claim for freedom "in interno foro", would appear to have satisfied the Church at this period, but we shall find later that ^{this civil control was} ~~these were~~ ^{an} to be deemed ^{an} interference with the Church's self-contained autonomy, ^{nevertheless,} ~~yet~~ ^{Even then} as we shall note, there seemed to remain a feeling that such supervision was within the right of the administrative officials of general justice.

We pass now to the consideration of the relations of Church and State from the point of view of their effect upon the social order. No deeper analysis of the Christian Ethic from the sociological point of view has been made than in the contributions of Troeltsch in his "Soziallehre", and in his "Fundamental Concepts of Ethics". ⁽¹⁾ The consideration of these throws a flood of light upon the meaning of the developments of this period at present under our review. It may be valuable here to summarize his statement as to the conception of ethical duty in Christian teaching

The locus classicus of the Ethic of Jesus he finds in the answer to the question as to which is the greatest commandment:- "Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with all thy heart and with all thy Soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself". This pairing of the two fundamental commandments and the inclusion of the second in the first, he

(1) In Vols. I. & II. of his collected works. Tubingen 1923.

remarks, is distinctive. Our duty to our fellow-men is thus not mere love of man as man but motivated by the love due to the Father, and He is thus the End and Final Aim of human conduct in Himself. An objective and an other-worldly goal is thus set before man for his seeking, wherein Christianity ranges itself alongside the other religious Ethics of the ancient world, which sought a world under the terms, Ideal, Natural, or Spiritual, which was not the world of earthly life. Accordingly Christianity ^{was} ~~is~~ slow to view and consider more than ^{was} ~~is~~ absolutely necessary, the facts of this earthly existence, and long continued its deep concentration upon ^{other-worldly aspects of union with God.} the ~~things of God.~~ Where the expectation of the great gift from God of ^{a Heavenly} ~~the~~ Kingdom was quickened, ^{worldly ideals} ~~such ideas~~ would naturally seem useless, and even as that idea receded Christianity ^{would come} ~~came~~ slowly to the consideration of things purely mundane. Such ideas were not indeed entirely out of its province for if God was the end, He was a Being not like the static Ideal Reality of ^{Some aspects of} ~~Platonism~~, but overflowing alive and containing within Himself positive ends for this world. When, however, attention was turned in this direction, the affairs of earthly life were viewed not as they are in themselves or for themselves but within the circle of religious ideas. Slavery for example was not considered from a humanitarian standpoint, but as affecting the relation of master and slave to God, and what organisation of civilisation was required from the religious standpoint was thus legislated by the Church for herself. Troeltsch thus concludes that for these reasons she organised herself fully and firmly for the purpose of realising such a sociological divine purpose, but that, throughout some eight centuries, she scarcely had any definite idea of the actually existent State, and made slight progress towards establishing a unified Christian civilisation.

We are confident that this analysis puts us in touch with

the mind of the Church which under Constantine moved forward to the great moral task which his alliance ^{had} made possible. It explains what was done and what was left undone. Religion dominated ~~the~~ ^{her} ethic, and God was the end in relation to which all things were considered. Thus the State turned Godward was first of all thought of as renouncing idolatry, giving scope for the fullest life of the religious, ceasing to allow shocking customs; but purely humanitarian considerations did not at once arise. The law "De raptu virginum" for example was designed to protect a soul from such criminal attack as might hinder it in its search for God. To seek to turn Christians to Judaism or Manichaeism was thought an almost equally heinous crime. Poverty, debt, and torture, however were not necessarily obstacles to the religious end and did not thus exercise so strongly the conscience of the Church as a Church.

It will be remembered that in a previous chapter we found reason to think, however, that the general effect of Christianity upon legislation was greater than Troeltsch supposed. We also pointed out that there was a tradition in her teaching whereby she shewed knowledge of what the State was, recognised its divine appointment, prayed for its rulers, and yielded to them her own implicit obedience. We noted also that the general radicalism or pessimism of existing social order, such as Stoical teaching had suggested, had not upon her so strong a hold as he is inclined to attribute to it. Lactantius, for example, had rejected its principal ideas. To him the "natural" life for humanity was in families and cities. She had her monks and ascetics but she was capable also we must remember, of developing a party of clerics like the Eusebians or Acacians, who apparently lost sight of the religious aim entirely in the purely human ideals of unity and good order. This party shows us the exaggeration of social aims working in the Church's thought of this period. So far as we can judge they had none of the enthusiasms of an Athanasius, no nor of an Arius or a

Melitius. Peace and policy, good government, the right Churchmen to keep order and to support the settled constitution of empire, are the characteristic ideals of an "Evastian" ⁽¹⁾ priesthood. We can detect these in them even thus early in the history of that recognisable type. Such bland conservatism lets the content of Christianity slip out while it concerns itself with political purposes. We can see that had Constantine obtained command of an entire Church of this sort, ~~he might have given such fresh life to the Empire as the first draught from her fountain of energy was worth, but there would have been no renewal.~~ ⁽²⁾ the State would have grasped a force which would have died in her hand without another pulse of vital energy. They were thus as unhelpful for State-ends as the other extremists who fled from the world to the desert. Midway between these two, however, lay the mind of the greater part of the Church. Eusebius of Caesarea occupies some space in noting the humanising effect of Christianity upon Constantine's general legislation, ⁽³⁾ the influence we may guess of such Churchmen as himself, Lactantius and Hosius. In addition to the changes in the laws already noted in the earlier part of his reign there fall within this period enactments against concubinage ⁽³⁾ and against gladiators (probably a local prohibition) ⁽⁴⁾. Women, especially those of marriageable age were further protected from inhuman treatment ⁽⁵⁾ and the children of concubinage had protective legislation. A severe law, however, was established against the marriage of a man of rank and a slave, sentencing the woman to the mines and the man to banishment and complete confiscation of goods, ⁽⁶⁾ a union which the Christian conscience as expressed by Callistus ⁽⁷⁾ had not found impermissible. We note also even in Eusebius a particular emphasis upon the legislation which was religious in its aim and a less degree of enthusiasm for what belonged to the improvement of

(1) We use the word in its current sense although such use is an undeserved slur upon the Swiss thinker Evastus whose name is thus abused. (2) V.C. IV. 26ff. (3) Codex Justinian. Migne p. 233. (4) Eccl. hist. 293.

(5) Eccl. hist. 366, 346. (6) Eccl. hist. 397. (7) Philostorgius.

merely earthly conditions. We believe, therefore, that while the Church did actually show interest in the general system of government and effect changes in it of no little worth, that she was unable to make quick advance in this direction. The reason was, as Troeltsch has said, that her authoritativeness concerned religion and the religious end, and ethical morality had to be worked out from these, her first principles. When a moral truth is so discovered it seems so obviously a part of the general teaching of Christianity, that we cannot understand the conservatism of the Church to so much that was evil in the State of the day, and her enthusiasm for legal changes which seemed only to bear upon questions of creed and correct opinion. It was, however, upon divine things ^{that} she had received her specific enlightenment, and if she was destined to reform the world it was not, in her foundation plan, to do it by creating a new earthly government but by leading men to seek God and to serve God and their fellow-men for his sake. Thus what Sozomen says of Constantine "In his legislation he sought to serve God" reveals the Church's ~~true~~ way of reaching a new social order, namely by inducing all governors and rulers to be themselves governed by the sense of love and duty they owe to Him who has set them in power. What she did, therefore, at Arles to provide for the careful religious supervision of those entrusted with civil government represented, it is certain, the most powerful and most useful influence which she had ^{then} to give towards the Christianising of the State. In the subsequent period some of her bishops with liberal help from the secular force seem to have sought to put in force a regime in accordance with their ideas of moral order, which had disastrous reactionary effects from time to time. In these results ^{she quickly saw} ~~we shall see~~ reason to deplore the too ready subservience of secular powers to priestly

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wishes. The result of a strong government such as Constantine's, controlling its own domain but showing markedly the effect of religious influences upon its outlook, was not at all ^{to} ~~such as to~~ be despised, but on the contrary made more real progress upon humanitarian lines than was made in the time of his sons.

When ~~the later emperors~~ ^{a Theodosius was} framing the law-codes of a Christian empire ~~they~~ ^{he} began ^{from} with the enactments of ~~his~~ ^{Constantine's} reign, not merely for theoretical considerations, but because his legislation contained a body of laws indispensable for ~~their~~ ^{that} purpose. From these facts and considerations, we may see that while the Eusebian party's subservience to the State ~~and steeped in merely worldly concerns~~, and the ascetics' ^{flight} ~~feeling~~ from the world were evident effects of the alliance of Church and State under Constantine, there was also set up a working principle of alliance, more honourable to the essential principles of both parties. The Church sought to make governors religious, and, as religious, they exhibited improvements in the doing of that which was their divinely entrusted work, and which moreover, as so largely practical work concerned with ways and means ^{and} not ~~ends~~ or principles, the clerics ^{might} ~~would~~ readily admit to lie out with the sphere of Churchly authority.

In maintaining the supremacy and sole authority of Jesus Christ and of the religious End which ~~He~~ had set before humanity, and at the same time with fidelity to these principles, ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ succeeding in making improvements in the social order, the Church thus made declaration of what she conceived to be the important factors in her life. All such moments of conflict give rise to exaggerations of certain aspects of truth. ~~We~~

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~~we~~ may regret for example that doctrine should be exalted, as it sometimes was, over primary moralities, which were far more needful for the approach to God; nevertheless historically the emphasis upon doctrine was good as against the theory that creed did not matter so long as outward unity, peace and good order could be established. If the analysis of the historical tradition of Christianity ~~just~~ ^{above} given is correct, then it was a wide departure from its principles to declare that a world-wide uniformity without marring sectarianism was more important than what might be thought as to the nature of the Godhead. The retort to any danger is usually an excess in the opposite direction. When teaching was not merely declared but legislated, and when that legislation exceeded in its terms, as at Nicaea, what could be called, at that time, agreed truth, we have an example of how defensive armour may harm and hamper the important organ which it protects. This hardening of teaching into dogma was however a needed shell of this period of conflict, and a sure index to the attentive student of the quarter from which the attack was being made most strongly. The State wished a Church to rule the world, but the exaltation of faith and right views of God marked the Church's sense that her Kingdom was not ^{entirely} of this world, and her aim not ^{merely} humanity in excellent relations one with another but in living contact with God. She thus refused the office of a political organisation to aid the State in governing men for purely moral ends and ~~remained~~ remained/

true to her religious aim and goal.

The actual secularisation which occurred is therefore to be sought in other directions. In the vital points of her sovereignty and ^{of} her final aim she remained true to her principles. In ~~the~~ important details of method she was not^{able} to maintain such purity, ^{although indeed} ~~indeed~~ it is the question whether absolute immunity from the influence of the world is at all attainable.

A preliminary word is required to enable us to distinguish between such secularising influence as might be traced in the first three centuries and this now before us. It was obvious that the Church's system of government was modelled upon Roman municipal government or on that prevailing in the Jewish communities, that the current philosophy of the world had been absorbed by her, and that the moral teaching of the ethical schools, especially of Stoicism, had been made freely her own. She had taken all these to herself, however, in such a manner as to make them completely hers. They were rethought from her own standpoint and so completely adopted that she opposed them without blush to their parental ^{originals} ~~origins~~ as if entirely independent. The analysis which can now detect their ^{sources} ~~originals~~ discovers little more than that Christians were men and women in the ancient world with the outlook and methods of its civilisation, and that consequently their self-government, thinking, and practice conformed to it, with the sublimating effects which their religious conceptions made upon them. In our present period, however, the Church was facing the world and using the world, and the consequences were some experiments in which unfamiliarity might cause grave error, and division of opinion might arise in her own mind.

A deeply significant fact is that the Constantinian peace caused an important theological change. As often happens

in a period of doctrinal transition we are baffled by silence, but it is plain that Lactantius who flourished in Constantine's early period is almost our last ardent Millenarianist among the great teachers.⁽¹⁾ Marcellus the companion of Athanasius taught that Christ's Kingdom was not itself final. Augustine in post-Constantian times is found rejecting these ideas although he confesses he had once adhered to them. The suspicion is thus engendered, supported by many a complaisant remark of Eusebius, that the Church found, in the State-adoption of Christianity and ⁱⁿ the aggrandisement of prestige which then came to the faith, sufficient consolation for long-deferred hopes. We may imagine that the ideas of the Advent wavered in the minds of Churchmen so that they neglected to speak of this expectation and ^{yet,} scarcely ~~yet~~ dared pronounce against it. Such an auspicious happening as the conversion of the Emperor seemed the augury of a new and glorious period in the world's history, not the foreshadowing of its speedy end. This theological change was determinative for two reasons, first because it was not unanimous, and secondly because it released the Church from ~~strict~~ ^{strict} concentration upon ~~her divine~~ ^{other-worldly} aims to consider the ^{present} world as something stable and permanent.

Influenced by this change she evolved the penitential system upon which we have remarked. Strictly speaking from the purely God-ward aspect of her life the Church's only ministry in regard to penitence ^{was} ~~is~~ to declare the forgiveness of sins. Faced by the problem of a mass of worldly converts, ^{however,} she took steps to avoid the scandal of frequent gross immoralities by demanding periods of mourning proportional to the seriousness of the offences. These would easily take the aspect of a punishment and discipline, for which she had neither text or warrant. Her ^{true} purpose was to bring man to God not to keep them back from Him because of her

(1) See e.g. Inst. VII. 14 ff. (2) De Civitat. Dei XX. 7.

practical difficulty of telling whether they were sincerely repentant or no. The experiment was not successful in its history and had the worse defect, noticeable even then, of ~~making an~~ ^{setting} apparent punishments which ~~was~~ ^{were} obviously too slight for the offences.

A second change was the acceptance of State wealth, even of excessive wealth, to aid her propaganda and to put her poor beyond the state of ~~poverty~~ ^{miserable}. That wealth should beautify her places of worship was a great desideratum she felt for the purpose of bringing adherents to her. The money acquired by her clerics was probably not ^{to any great extent} used for improper luxury, but jealousy could be caused by it, and ~~a great~~ ^{so great} prosperity and comfort ^{reign} within Catholic circles that heathen and sectarian hearts were filled with a passionate sense of injustice.

In the third place Churchmen used the civil power, which seemed freely at their disposal at times, to repress what they considered impieties and breaches of ecclesiastical orderliness. Such use was the occasion of imprisonments and floggings, and, in ~~revenge~~ ^{revenge}, of accusations and libels, which caused widespread confusion and ill-will.

There ~~was~~ ^{were} no doubt other evidences of secularising influence in individuals ~~Churchmen~~ but the three thus enumerated can be affirmed in greater or lesser degree of the whole body of Churchmen, and, as we ~~found~~ ^{have seen}, so great a bishop as Athanasius was by no means guiltless of them.

It was natural that the mind of certain bodies of Christians revolted at these practices and their effects. The sectaries and monks, protesting most probably also against the anti-Milleniarist teaching which made them possible, left this Church-world with its weak ecclesiastical deterrents and rejected this wealth and civil power. The Church then made room for the monks within, or rather outwith and alongside of itself, and

existed in two bodies, a secular and a monastic, which constituted a working system, ^{in spite of its} ~~but one with~~ very obvious defects. It can hardly be claimed that it is a final solution of the problem presented by the world to the Church, on one side to be immersed in it and use its weapons freely, on the other to shun it altogether. Such, however, ^{was} ~~is~~ the only one forthcoming at this time. One cannot contemplate with ^{greater} approbation ~~however~~ the conduct of the Sectarials, ^{for if they were more consistent it was at considerable} ~~who without recognising the work of the Church prided~~ ^{sacrifice of power. It can be claimed for the} ~~themselves upon their more select gatherings~~ ^{that it} ~~The Catholic body~~ was caring for the souls of those who were weak but who were nevertheless seeking God, and for the indifferent whom influences of fashion and public recognition might induce to seek Him. Without that work they could not pretend that the Church's purpose in the world was being completely fulfilled.

We hazarded the opinion that the Novatian body had perhaps a fuller system that has hitherto been supposed. If they had attached to their company, who were in full membership, any large number of aspirants or penitent failures, none of whom, even in that condition, were regarded as excluded from Heaven after death or from a certain contact with God now, we would have a reversal of the Catholic plan of Church and Monk without many of its defects.

This the more would convince us however that the full answer of ^{Constantinian} ~~the Church~~ to the claims of the world ^{was} ~~must be~~ a dual one. Troeltsch ^{believes} ~~tells us~~ frankly that this ^{must always be so} ~~is so~~ and ^{and that finally it must even be a triple} ~~and even finally a triple one~~ of Church, Sectary and mystic. ~~With reference to the point before~~ ^{He} tells us that Church-type and sect-type "both lie in consequence of the Gospel and first together express the range of its sociological effects and therewith the social consequences which adhere to its religious organisation".⁽¹⁾ In his opinion as we understand him, the Christian mind must regard the universal

nature of the end to be realised, and so guided only ^{by} its own experience and judgment, (since the first records were absorbed with the Advent and left it no guidance) it must work by experiment and compromise to bring all things into tune with the divine end. On the other hand the sectary or monk ^{in his view,} is not defecting from the Gospel when he emphasises personal adherence to the complete and full ideal, absorbed in which, he does not contemplate the ^{present} world at all.

Such a statement ^{may well serve,} ~~is~~ whatever may be thought of its absolute truth, ^{as} an excellent psychological account of the ^{Christian} ~~historical~~ ^{consciousness} ~~fact~~ of this period, whereby the contact with the world gave us these contrasted elements to carry forward the Christian tradition. ⁽¹⁾ They are valuable therefore ~~to us~~ to keep us from the error of concentrating on any one as the full and final answer of Christianity to the problems presented by Constantine's reign. As we have said, the isolation of Church and monastery can be over-drawn. Letters flowed back and forward between the world and the hermit's cave. The monk prayed for the bishop and the bishop taught his flock the lessons of the monk's life. The Church set up for her world-purpose an organised hierarchy, and bowed at the feet of this prophetic ministry of the desert. She legislated the faith into dogma and heard the rhapsodies of her mystics with eager attention. She handled wealth and extolled the skin-clad hermit who lived on alms. She used power and pomp and yet despised it. She took the whole motley crowd of humanity and sought to govern them by threatening punishment of withheld sacraments, yet her boldest souls sought no mediation, even of sacred appointment, and overstepped the whole sacramental system to go directly to God. The sects too influenced the Catholic body. Probably Eusebius tells a Donatist fable as a piece of history. Athanasius was yet to figure as a dragon in a Melitian tale adopted

(1) There must finally be however a higher synthesis. The mind of Jesus had achieved one. He found the mystic's aim of communion with God in the world of creation and of human activity where the Father was found governing by patience and love and actively working. He sought God not as an individual but was eager in tendency to draw all men with Him, rebuking sin but shunning the society of neither Pharisees or publicans. Such a universal aim was oneness with God, in His teaching, and the way to childhood of The Father was through practice of His universal pity.

as part of the Catholic tradition. Thus the answer of Christianity to the State-problem ^{was} ~~is~~ not a story of secularisation alone but of world-shunning, self-denying asceticism as well. Out of these actions and reactions ^{was} ~~is~~ moulded the Church of the next age, ready as we shall see to renounce civil power ~~utterly~~ for religious ends, condemning its own wealth, ~~and~~ suspecting gifts like a Donatist, ^{and daring} ~~ready~~ to go out into the wilderness even from the Roman seat of power like the monk. One thing she would not renounce, however, and that was the care of the world of men now put within her power. Her system would change but she might never cease to discover by experiment, by trial and error, by the use of a method and then the abandonment of it, how she might bring the whole body of humanity into her conception of divine end. Excess and defect in these experiments prove only that it is difficult to use ^{this} world as not abusing it, when once the conviction is lost ^{the fashion of} that ^{this} world passes away. She could have here no ready-made road on which to advance, and no clear-cut principle to guide her. She could judge only by the application ^{of} her general fundamental conceptions, ^{by} her rationalising powers, and ^{by} the verdict of the ^{results} ~~history~~ of events ^{of her} upon certain experiments.

Noting then how the Church was armed against the
~~Assured then that the~~ two vital menaces of Constantian ^{erie}
ecclesiastical policy, viz the attack upon Christianity's divine sovereignty and upon its divine final purpose, ~~were already laid~~
~~low~~, we pass to the instructive consideration of the lessons learned by the Church in its secular experiments ^{during} the reigns of ^{Constantine's} ~~his~~ sons.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SONS OF CONSTANTINE.

SEPARATION BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN CHURCH.



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It is commentary upon the contradictions of human character, that Constantine, one of the most far-sighted of men, does not appear to have extended his vision beyond his own life-time. It does all justice to his paternal affection, and also to his desire to avoid a repetition of such an affair as that of Crispus, that all his sons, three in number, were raised to the Caesarship, and also that two of his nephews received this mark of favour. All these were too, his heirs by his will. The second son, ^{Constantius,} however, whose domains suffered most from this generosity, took savage steps to have his inheritance unencumbered. One cousin was slain by an insurrection of soldiers, and the other was also removed together with ^{Constantine's} ~~half-brothers and his~~ ^{uncles,} and Constantine's most trusted counsellor, Ablavius. The absurd excuse given for these acts was that the late emperor had dictated them, having discovered a conspiracy to poison him. According to the ecclesiastical historians the testament of Constantine was much interfered with, through being entrusted to an Arian presbyter, a protégé of the late emperor's sister, Constantia. The reference in these statements must be to Acacius, but more evidence would be required to attach the guilt of these executions to any ecclesiastic. Churchmen may indeed have acquiesced in them from some unknown motives, as we find in the history of Eusebius a veiled reference to these events. He alleges that "the natural goodness of the Emperor (Constantine) made him trust men whose conduct was only artifice and imposture", and that "Divine justice did not long defer chastisement on these persons who had so deceived his goodness." All that we know of Constantius however, would make us willing to believe him capable of such actions upon his own

authority, and also of attributing his motives to filial obedience. It is certainly possible on the other hand that military disorders and mutinies over which he had no control were in part responsible. The events, whatever was their cause, established the three sons of Constantine as sole rulers over the Empire, Constantine II over Gaul; Constans over Rome ^{and} Africa; ~~and the West~~; Constantius over the East from the Straits of Propontis.

It may be convenient to sum up the main events of their reigns before discussing the various ecclesiastical movements of the time in which they played a part.⁽¹⁾ The oldest son, Constantine II, was the first to seek self-advancement at his brother-emperor's expense. With a small and badly equipped force, and in no very sober personal condition, he emerged from his farther Western inheritance and invaded Italy. He met his end not far from Aquileia, and the youngest son, Constans, then held all the empire of the West to the straits of Propontis, where Constantius began his domain, which reached from Constantinople to the farthest East. The Eastern Emperor was fully employed throughout the early part of his reign with a Persian war, whereas Constans, who entered into the happy results of Constantine's peace with the Goths and Sarmatians, and who was also a ruler who put public good above private consideration,⁽²⁾ was blessed with general prosperity. He filled his leisure however with hunting and other amusements, and, while he was thus employed, a conspiracy was formed against him. His empire was seized by one Magnentius, and he himself killed near the city of Helena, in the Pyrenees. Thus in 350 A.D. Constantius claimed the entire empire. He had still however to make good his claim against the usurper. Vetricio, the head of the army, a man generally credited with the greatest degree of stupidity, was persuaded by some to proclaim himself emperor. Constantius, who above all things wished to be regarded as an orator, on a set day made terms with him, and

(1) Our sources are chiefly the heathen historians, Ammianus Marcellinus, ~~with the Christian writers~~, the records of the two Aurelii, Eutropius and Zosimus. (2) So Aurel. De m. & v. Imperat. Xlv.

ascended a common throne before the soldiers. Both addressed the troops. Vetrano was so moved by what the son of the great Constantine said that he renounced the rank which he had assumed. As reward he received not only his life, but a pension of such a size as may lead one to suppose that perhaps some of this procedure had been sketched out beforehand. The wily ruler of the East had now the force of Vetrano to add to his own forces which were practised, if not talented, in war. Magnentius offered him excellent terms of truce and matrimonial alliance, laying emphasis in his negotiations upon the hopelessness of any effort to overcome the powerful armies of the Western Empire, by means of Greek and Oriental troops. Constantius had seen however, in a vision, the spirit of his father standing with his murdered son in his arms, and peace was unthinkable. The contest was not successful until Constantius at last gained the signal and influential victory of Myrsa (353 A.D.). In this battle so great was the loss of Roman man-power as to bring the Empire to the brink of utter ruin. Not long after, Magnentius, deserted by his soldiery, amid the shouts of his own forces hailing Constantius, fell upon his sword and died. The end of his usurpation marked the commencement of an inquisition of a particularly cruel description. Even in parts so remote from participation in the conspiracy as Britain, investigations were so severely conducted that the tender-hearted Deputy-Governor of the Island committed suicide.

Constantius thus became sole Emperor in 353 A.D. and reigned as such until 361. He was not able to keep the entire government in his own hands during that period. In going West to meet Magnentius, he had to appoint as Caesar of the East, one of the only two male survivors of his family, namely Gallus, the second son of Julius Constantius, brother of Constantine. To bind his good will to himself he gave him in marriage Constantia, his own sister, and

one who was a full inheritor of all the family ambition. She was also, if Ammianus Marcellinus is not prejudiced against her, an incarnate fury (Megaera quidem mortalis) the gift to whom, of a pearl necklace was worth a man's life. Gallus himself was incapable of government.⁽¹⁾ It is narrated that he ordered the destruction of an entire city, because the inhabitants demurred at his method of relieving a famine, by fixing all commodities at a low price. Tales of his inhumanity and incompetence reaching the Emperor's ears, who was in any case a man incapable of trust, he sent to his assistance two envoys whose insolence to the young man was so excessive, and so obviously inspired, that he dealt with them in his own characteristic savage manner. For this action he was recalled from his command, stripped of the purple, and banished to Dalmatia. Constantius was a ruler who allowed himself to be very much in the hands of his advisers, particularly of one notorious schemer, the eunuch, Eusebius. Upon this person's shoulders is usually laid the blame of the death of Gallus, which followed shortly after his exile.

Julian, the younger brother of the ill-fated Gallus, was now, with the exception of the Emperor, the sole male survivor of all the many descendants of Constantius Chlorus. He was fortunate in having a friend at Court in the person of the Empress Eusebia, and through her influence he was raised to the Caesarship, and given government in Gaul. He received as wife, the Emperor's other sister, Helena, and henceforth left his happy philosophic studies in Greece to live at the Court of Milan, surrounded by spies who reported his every action to his jealous cousin.⁽²⁾ Many as the tales would be that were so carried, it speaks highly for the enduring influence which Eusebia exercised over her suspicious husband, that the Caesar continued safe and unmolested throughout her life.

(1) Ammianus Marcellinus IV. vii, Cf. Philostorgius III. 28. Gallus was a Christian but perhaps the worst of the Constantians, although an Christian writer because of his religion compares Julian unfavourably with him, yet even he can find little for moral praise (See Gregory Nazianzen. Oration.) (2) See his own letters, espec. letter to the Athenians.

A notable event, in the reign of Constantius, was his triumphal entry into Rome in 357, although that city did not entirely receive with enthusiasm one who celebrated a victory in civil war. The spectacle was however all that could be desired. Constantius' magnificent cavalry in their new equipment, which was attributed to the invention of the Emperor himself, made a splendid pageant, nor were ^{there} wanting the salutations of the people. Amid their resounding plaudits, this monarch, who was in everything a thorough oriental, moved on, as through a strange city conquered in war. He maintained, throughout, that absolutely immovable countenance which was one of his small conceits. The effect of his father's policy might be seen in him, who, brought up in the new city of the East, looked on all the glories of Rome through a foreigner's eyes, and without patriotic affection. The temple of Tarpeian Jupiter, the vast Amphitheatre, and the Pantheon did however cause him a little to wonder. In the Forum of Trajan, he stood, believed by the enthusiastic Romans to be, for all his studied expressionlessness, awed by its inimitable proportions. He made but one remark and that upon the horse of Trajan's statue. He said that they could supply a better steed in the East. "But first", said an attendant, "build him such a stable as this." The lingering impression left upon his mind caused him afterwards to ^{send} to the Eternal City upon the Tiber, a monument to his own remembrance, a great obelisk of the Sun-god from Thebes, which by a most daring engineering feat he ~~transported from that city to Rome~~, and by another no less extraordinary, had erected in the Circus Maximus. ⁶

When the protectress of Julian died, open rupture with the Emperor seemed inevitable. Envoys arrived in his district in the manner which had been used with Gallus. They had to deal however with a man of patience and self-control, and moreover with one, who,

- (1) He had contemplated the erection of a similar monument at Constantinople but it was left to his successor to erect it. (See Julian Ep. to Alexandrian (4.48) Herlein 58.)

in carrying on a highly successful war with the Goths, had won the hearts of all by his affability and extraordinary courage.

Even he could not contain his moderation of temper, however, when he beheld his troops being taken from his command and marched away to Eastern service, and that too, in spite of his express promise, given when he raised them, that they would only be used for military operations in Gaul.⁽¹⁾ The pleadings of his faithful men and the tears of their wives and children, as they clung to their arms, moved him to remonstrance with the Emperor, and when that was unavailing, at last to revolt. He allowed himself to be declared Augustus ~~and~~ *but neither general had leisure for the time for a civil strife. When at length Julian moved against his cousin* ~~not a general~~ *he was only in time to* stand uncovered before his dead body. Constantius, extraordinarily aroused by the revolt of Julian, and neglecting a fever as he urged on to meet his foe, had died suddenly, and in dying he had named ^{Julian,} his rebellious ^{relative and} ~~successor~~ the last of the Constantians, as his successor.

We must now examine the ecclesiastical events of the period thus summarised. We first of all discover that ~~on the death of his father, Constantine II, that~~ in important directions the sons of Constantine differed from their father in their general Church policy. Their tendency, ~~however,~~ *is undoubted, although it may be* of Non-Christians, ~~had however been much exaggerated, by many~~ *Certainly,* ⁽²⁾ An edict of Constantius forbade Christian women to inter-marry with Jews, and we find also among the laws of this period one with the commencement, "Cesset superstitio, sacrificiorum aboleatur in ~~san~~ania."⁽³⁾ The authority of Constantine the Great is claimed for this law, which stands in the name of his son of the same name. The decree is, however, suspicious in that contrary to Roman legal practice, no penalty is named for disobedience. It is possible that it may refer only to secret

(1) This is Julian's version of the story in the letter to the Athenians. Both generals seem to have been operating with woefully small forces. Constantius needed troops certainly, but Julian was probably right in feeling he could not spare ^{them} ~~but~~ in point of fact, later, ~~they~~ seemed willing to march East against Constantius. (2) Codex Theod. XVI Tit. X 2.2. (3) Cod. Theod. XVI Tit. VII 16.

sacrifices in which case the reference to previous enactments would be natural, as we saw that Constantine the Great waged relentless war upon these unauthorised ceremonies. We have a law of Constantius dealing with this topic (Cod.Theod.9.16.4.) on traditional lines. What may give one to pause before believing that the young emperors made the old faith a "religio illicita" is the fact that several laws give protection for the ancient cult. Constans enacted that all persons attempting to demolish sepulchres were to be condemned to the mines and the ~~following~~ ^{following this in the statutes} law ^{lays} the charge of protecting these places upon the heathen priest (Cod. Theod.9.17.1 and 2). The law following this again is a similar enactment on the authority of Constantius. ^{The name of} Constans is ^{also} ~~also~~ found associated with a decree protecting the Temples connected with the public games. The very fact, however, that such a law as this last was at all required seems to point to some action having been taken to close up certain pagan places of worship. A general lack of consistency upon this question must be postulated. We have, for example, a savagely worded law ordering a cessation of heathen practices on pain of death in the name of Constantius, and Libanius accuses that ruler of ruining temples and depressing the schools of the Sophists. Symmachus ⁽²⁾ however tells us that he deprived Roman ceremonies of none of their dues, left the Vestals in undisturbed possession of their privileges, and, in fact, made all necessary arrangements with regard to the ancient cult. That ~~these statements were founded on fact~~ ^{this was so} ⁽³⁾ may be proved from other sources. Beugnot quotes the evidence of many inscriptions to show that heathenism was strong and had the allegiance of high officers of state throughout this time. ~~and indeed quotes.~~ ^{unknown} ⁽⁴⁾ An ~~old~~ ^{unknown} geographer gives evidence that as late as 374 A.D. the Vestals were undisturbed at Rome and ~~that~~ ⁽⁵⁾ heathen worship was prominent. His data may be confirmed on the witness of Lactantius, ⁽⁵⁾ and the story of Victorinus, narrated by Augustine. ⁽⁶⁾ With

- (1) Codex Theod. XVI Tit. 8 2. 4. (2) Epistle. 61. (3) Vol II. cap. II of la Fin du Paganisme.
 (4) Edited by Hudson & W. H. Oxford 1698. (5) Institutes. C. I. C. 21
 (6) Confessions. VIII. 25.

possibly a ~~running~~ ^{the latter author} reference to Libanius [^] shows that, in the Schools, the weapon of a persecution of a social kind was still in pagan hands. Victorinius was one who became a convert to Christianity in the reign of Constantius, but in Augustine's words "feared to offend his friends, proud demon-worshippers, from the height of whose Babylonian dignity, as from cedars to Libanus, which the Lord had not yet broken down, he supposed the weight of enmity would fall upon him." From which conflicting evidence, if one does not suppose, with Beugnot, that the anti-pagan decrees in the Codex Theodosius, are forgeries, or drafts of legislature never promulgated, one must conclude that these repressive measures were largely merely verbal violence. Firmicus Maternus ⁽¹⁾ is the only

^{of this period} ecclesiastical writer who favours harsh measures towards unbelievers, ~~but savage deeds are not unheard of in it.~~ The atmosphere ~~The fine words of auxiliary on religious liberty incline one to~~ of Julian's letter "regarding a visit to a temple at Tlios suggests that believe that in general they favoured measures of tolerance towards the temples were in many parts unused and closed but strictly protected them. Their numbers and influence would in any case make attack from iconoclasm by appointed caretakers, the Christian cleric sometimes an impossible proposition to the State. A statement frequently acting in this capacity. Sometimes as at Alexandria a temple might not with in historical works that the sons of Constantine by severe be taken over for Christian worship. In most parts it would seem they anti-heathen legislation drove the ancient faith out of the cities came to be unused, yet this caused little disturbance among the heathen into rural districts is founded on a misunderstanding. The word, so long as they were not destroyed or injured. In certain parts the paganus, does not mean a "country-man" but a "civilian" as opposed cultus must have been still in force, not necessarily in the country to miles, a "soldier". Thus the fact that the name, "pagan" became chiefly, as is the historical commonplace; for the word "paganus" which gave the current title for the non-Christian is no evidence upon this rise to that idea does not mean a "rustic" but a "civilian" in point, but so far as it has any value indicates a certain hardship contrast with a Christian "soldier". (3) still supposed by the adherents of the new faith to attach to their profession.

It is decidedly evident, however, that the younger Constantians did very much exaggerate the older policy of giving privileges to the clergy. (3) Entertainment taxes by which individuals became responsible for hospitality to judges on circuit and to soldiers on duty were remitted to them, which put them on a level

- (1) Firmicus Maternus. *De Errore Profanarum Religionum*.
 (2) Julian To a Priest. 19 (Hertlein 78.) (3) See Hobhouse, *Church and the World in Ideal History*.
 (4) Cod. Theod. XVI Tit. II. 28.

with those of senatorial rank. They were also allowed freedom from the poll-tax, all extraordinary taxes, the Horse and the Recruit tax.⁽¹⁾ They were immune from the trading tax as far as regarded profit which might go to the good of the poor.⁽²⁾ They were exempted from the necessity of providing for the transit of imperial provisions. They had been immune since the previous reign from the duties of public offices, but these privileges had been found to cause unsuitable men to enter the ranks of the clergy and had been restricted. They were now renewed and extended even to the sons of clergy. We find that some of these benefits were found to be excessive, and in particular that Constantius, was uncertain as to the value of granting such benefit to the cleric's children.⁽³⁾

We seem too to read behind the events of the period a greater tendency on the part of these new rulers to leave Churchmen to their own way in ecclesiastical affairs. There appeared to be no continuation of the theory of a high spiritual place for the Augustus within the Church while there was more than one ruler. Perhaps the character and circumstances of the emperors were the reasons. Constantine II was weak and dissolute, and Constans though a ruler of benevolence and public spirit was much addicted to sport and possibly to less honourable pastimes. Constantius was much occupied with wars upon the Persians. Perhaps, however, the fact that all these princes had been brought up as catechumens of the Church had impressed upon them a humbler attitude towards its affairs, the effect of which lingered long with them. It is noticeable at all events how, in succession to the dominating influence in all ecclesiastical matters by Constantine, his sons appear, at first to be rather the weapons of the Churchmen, than Emperors seeking to use them as executive officers of their government. We do not, ^{at this period} at all events, find their policy in any sense dominating the Church.

(1) *Codex Theod.* XVI *Tit.* XVII . 22. (2) *loc. cit.* *Tit.* II . 2. 10. (3) *loc. cit.* *Tit.* II . 22. 9. 10.

The first incident of ^{importance} ~~this period~~ occurred in an interval in Constantius' wars with Persia. On his return from one of his campaigns to Constantinople about 338 or 339, he found a great dispute in full progress. Alexander, the aged bishop of that city, had died without naming a successor. He had put two names before the electors, that of Paul, a Presbyter, who was a good man and apt to teach, and Macedonius, an older cleric who was more conversant with public affairs and more able to confer with rulers. This Paul had been for some reason previously expelled, and even his friends seem to admit that he lacked prudence in wordly affairs. About the same time Eusebius of Caesarea died, and his successor in office was Acacius, who had influence with Constantius. ^{He was} ~~and~~ ^{probably} ~~have been~~ that presbyter, the protégé of Constantia, who was credited with ^{seeking to incline Constantine} ~~influencing the Court~~ towards Arianism. ^{Whether under Acacian influence} ~~Constantius~~ ^{or not, Constantius} banished Paul, and effected, as he no doubt thought, a politic settlement by dismissing Macedonius also, and electing Eusebius of Nicomedia to the bishopric. Persian troubles then took him again into the East.

The new bishop of Constantinople, in so strong a position, was not likely to leave in peace his old enemy of Alexandria. Athanasius, returned by orders of Constantine II and the general amnesty declared on the death of Constantine, was officiating in his old See. Certain of the elements in ^{it} ~~his See~~ were suffering through his characteristic vigour for Homöousian doctrine and, ^{at} ~~last~~, balked of a share in the generous provision made for the poor of the Church by the late Emperor. ^{they} ~~he~~ accused the uncompromising bishop, of neglect of stewardship, or of deliberate peculation in this respect. Eusebius supported them in this plea. He also took action against him on the ground that although deposed by a Synod at Tyre he had despised this judicial action of his brethern, and without attempting to seek ecclesiastical authority, had, on the mere permission of the

- (1) Socrates is prejudiced (II. 6) in the opinion of Sozomen (III. 3) in giving an account less honourable to Macedonius. We select Sozomen's account as perhaps the more fair, (2.) See Athan. Apol. contra Arian. § 18.

Emperor resumed his office. This in fact was the weak point in the case of Athanasius, on which his opponents now fastened, and for which he had no adequate defence.⁽¹⁾ The protagonist of orthodoxy, the bold defier of tyrants, astonishes us indeed by his failure to maintain the independence of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. He could easily have sought from a Roman Synod restoration and authority to return to Alexandria, but he had either despised the sentence of Tyre, as that of no true Council, or thought the consent of the Emperors sufficient to allow him to resume his duties. This error was to cost him dearly, for Eusebius and his fellow-bishops founded upon it a strong case, instead of the weak and flimsy pleas against him, with which they had previously had to be content.

With Pistus, whom Athanasius calls an Arian, but who, whatever his views may have been, ^{was probably} the bishop elected in ^{room of Athanasius} ~~his room~~ at the time of his excommunication, Eusebius, ^{with those of his party, now} ~~and those led by him now~~ corresponded as the legal bishop. He sent embassies to Rome to persuade the Bishop there to do likewise.⁽²⁾ At the same time he forwarded ~~to him~~ the table of accusations against Athanasius, together with the findings of the notorious Commission to the Mareotis, and the decisions of the Council of Tyre. He presented also the same statement to the Emperors Constans and Constantine II.⁽³⁾ These Emperors, however, seem to have repulsed or ignored the Eusebian envoys. Bishop Julius of Rome sent the evidence of the Commission to Athanasius, and offered Eusebius that a new Council should be held to examine the whole matter afresh.⁽⁴⁾

Athanasius on receipt of the accusations, etc., from Bishop Julius, called together a Synod of Alexandrian clerics to the number of about a hundred, who issued to the three Emperors (we note again Athanasius' characteristic appeal to imperial authority) a statement,⁽⁵⁾ testifying to the falsity of the old accusations. His

- (1) He is silent upon the point as is his characteristic in a difficulty. He would have maintained that the Council of Tyre was no true Council, so the letter of the Egyptian bishops argued. See below. (2) Athanasius, *Apol. c. Arian*, § 19+24.
 (3) *loc. cit.* 22, 23, + 24. (4) See letter of Bp. Julius of Rome. *loc. cit.* § 20-35.
 (5) Letter of Egypt. Bps. *loc. cit.* § 3-19.

return had been, they strongly affirmed, no intrusion, but had been welcomed by his own clergy and people with the greatest enthusiasm. His complete innocence of anything like peculation was easily proved by them ^{and Tyre, they affirmed, was no Council but a military court.} Thereafter the Bishop of Rome summoned Athanasius to him, expecting that some of the Eusebians would arrive to pursue their accusations. He waited there a year and a half without any appearance being made by his enemies, and then returned to Alexandria.⁽¹⁾

The dating of these events, it may be noted, has been a matter of acute controversy in all accounts of the period, but fortunately from Athanasius' Festal Letters,⁽²⁾ we are able with fair certainty accurately to determine the sequence of these events. We take it that the letter of the Alexandrian clerics addressed to the three emperors, can be dated about 339 A.D. Athanasius on the evidence of Bishop Julius, came to Rome on ^{a summons following that letter} ~~that summons~~ and remained a year and a half which would take him to an early date (Jan?) ⁱⁿ 341 ⁽²⁾ A.D. We have evidence from a Festal Letter that he was in Rome at that time. Shortly after that he must have returned to Alexandria, for we know that he was in that city in Lent of that year.

Civil war broke out between Constans and Constantine ^{about} 340 A.D. and this ^{was} ~~the~~ apparently the excuse the Eusebians ~~made~~ made for not accepting the invitation to Rome. They seem to have been more ^{influenced} ~~exercised~~, however, by the ^{conviction} ~~feeling~~ that a decision which they had made in an Eastern Council, ^{ought} ~~should~~ not be reviewed by any Western authority. They showed their feelings, Pistus the bishop whom they recognised having died or been withdrawn, by appointing a new bishop in his room, Gregory, whom they sent to take over his duties in Easter 341.

Whether encouraged by Athanasius or not, the Catholic party of Alexandria determined to resist this intrusion. They crowded

(1) See Bp. Julius letter loc. cit. supra. (2) Burgess Oxford 1854.

(2) Confusion has been caused by many historians supposing this year and a half at Rome was subsequent to Athanasius' flight from Alexandria. The letter of Julius is explicit upon the point that he refers to a time spent after a summons. "not on his own accord but on a summons". It has no reference therefore to happenings after Gregory's intrusion. The Historia Acephala p. 112. says Athanasius second exile lasted seven and a half years. ~~The Festal Letter Theodoret (p. 4)~~ makes Gregory's rule six years. Reconciliation is to be found in noting that (P.T.O.)

into their churches as if determined to hold them by force.

Philagrius, the prefect, was determined to carry out the Imperial command. This magistrate was blamed for violence at the time of the Commission, and also would seem to have used repressive measures, for which Athanasius was blamed, before the return of that bishop.⁽¹⁾

If these acts complained of could be at all connected with Athanasius, they must have been directed against his opponents, and thus there would seem to have been a certain impartiality in the harshness of Philagrius. Previous horrors were now admittedly surpassed, however, and in the prefect's efforts to make way for Gregory, the horrors of a Diocletian persecution were said to be revived. The Church and Baptistery were set on fire. Monks were trampled underfoot, the holy virgins used with dishonour, and many people killed or wounded. Jews burned the Scriptures and indulged in obscene mockeries of sacred rites, while the heathen, joining in the broil, tortured as many as they could seize, attempting to make them blaspheme.⁽²⁾

All this apparently happened before the ^{entry}~~arrival~~ of the new Bishop, since Athanasius indicates clearly that he was present while it took place, and it is known that he fled four days before his successor arrived.⁽³⁾ Thus Philagrius, the prefect, must be credited with this violence, and with an attack upon the Church, where Athanasius usually lived, which seemed so murderous that the latter fled. Feeling on this subject now ran very high indeed, we may see. Announcements of the return or change of bishops caused rioting, and the civil governor intervened in no very disciplined way amongst these disorders, and satisfied perhaps private grudges by allowing licence to the mob.

Bishop Gregory, however, on his arrival proved that he could be as violent as the Prefect. Going into Church on Good Friday, he noted that the people received him with abhorrence, and had

he had an exile of 1½ years due to Julius' summons & 18 Eastern delay followed by exile on his return (Studen in Arrian) & Robinson (Nicene Fathers) agree that he left in 339 A.D. Thus the Synod of Antioch 341 must be that which ordained Gregory as Socrates says. ^{Greenshield on his} (2) Euseb. letter to Bps p 2 ff. ^{loc. cit. supra. p 5.}

(1) See letter of Eusebius to Bps. Preface to Festal letters confirms.

(3) So he tells us Hist. Arrian. p 11. Preface to Festal letters confirms.

scourged by the Governor some thirty-four persons, virgins, married women, and men of rank.⁽¹⁾ Persons formerly excommunicated by Athanasius rejoiced and returned to take over the property of the Church, but Gregory found very many dissentients. He forbade private worship, and compelled people to communicate with him or to receive stripes. He also caused the Prefect to bring forward an indictment repeating all the charges of the various accusations against Athanasius who remained in flight. His people, meanwhile, were without help of religious ministry in their various necessities, dying without baptism, or enduring sickness without priestly prayers. Bishops who had been confessors, such as Sarapammon and Potammon, were cruelly treated, the latter dying of his ill-usage.⁽²⁾ Aged men, who had been long in the episcopate were given up to employment in public works, and many were banished for no other reason, than refusal to communicate with the new Bishop.⁽³⁾ Thus a persecution had come into vigorous life, which was directed now, not by heathen against Christians, but by Christians on one another, and that too with the end to cause congregations to conform to, and accept the ministrations of one particular bishop, instead of another.⁽⁴⁾

What was the situation from the respective points of view. Accusations had been brought against Athanasius before the Emperors and the Bishop of Rome. The latter had called a Council at Rome. Athanasius had gone to him and awaited his accusers. Meantime backed by imperial authority in the person of the Prefect in Egypt, a new bishop, ordained by a Council of his accusers, meeting at Antioch, had been sent into his place. How the Western Church viewed these events, is to be seen in the letter of the Bishop Julius of Rome.⁽⁵⁾ He wrote:- "Granted that Athanasius was in a position of a criminal before the Council, this appointment ought not to have been made, thus illegally and contrary to the canons of the Church, but the Bishops of the province ought to have

(1) Greg. letter to Bps. § 5. (2) Victor. Arian § 12. (3) letter of Bp. Julius loc. cit. supra.

(4) All this is of course the evidence of Athanasius himself. It is not at all improbable in view of his own high-handed action when in power of which the Melitian letters quoted previously gave witness.

(5) In Ath. an. Apol. c. Arian. § 29 ff.

ordained one in that very Church, of that very priesthood, of that very clergy.⁽¹⁾ We speak honestly in the sight of God, and declare that this proceeding was neither pious, nor lawful, nor ecclesiastical."

"You complain of our transgressing the Canons. Now consider who are they that have so acted? We who received this man after such ample proof of his innocence, or they who being at Antioch at the distance of six and thirty posts, appointed a stranger to be a bishop, and sent him to Alexandria with a military force? What Canon of the Church or Apostolic tradition warrants this, that when the Church was at peace, and so many bishops were in unity with Athanasius, Gregory should be sent thither, a stranger to the city, not having been baptised there, or known to the general body, and desired neither by Presbyters, nor bishops, nor laity, that he should be ordained at Antioch and sent to Alexandria, accompanied not by Presbyters, nor by Deacons of the city, nor by Bishops of Egypt, but by soldiers! for they who came hither complained that this was the case."

This letter was written when Athanasius fled from Alexandria and was received at Rome by Bishop Julius, and some fifty clerics.⁽²⁾ It expressed the opinion of them all, and their feeling was plainly that the laws of the Church had been violated by the use of unauthorised civil authority,⁽³⁾ that, in fact, a civil intrusion of a cleric into office had taken place. "Word should have been sent to all", they said, "that a true sentence might proceed from all." Julius made moreover a very important claim on behalf of his own prerogative. "Are you ignorant that the custom has been concerning the Church of Alexandria, for word to be written first to us, and then for a just sentence to be passed from this place. If then, any suspicion rests upon the Bishop there, notice thereof ought to have been sent to the Church of this place, whereas after

(1) See Canon of Nicaea supra. (2) *Apol. Arian* § 20. *Hist. Arian* § 11.
 (3) See esp. *Apol. Arian* § 35.

neglecting to inform us, and proceeding on their own authority as they pleased, they now desire to obtain our concurrence in their decisions."

What was the point of view of the Eastern or Eusebian party. The letter of Julius is a reply to a letter of theirs, and what it contained we may gather from his references. They first of all, (1) stated that a gathering of bishops, a regular ecclesiastical Synod at Antioch had now again removed Athanasius and had ordained Gregory to the bishopric of Alexandria. They had certainly ^{at the previous} ~~time~~ received an invitation from Julius to a Council, but could not accept because the decrees of one Council might not be reviewed by another, (2) and in any case the time fixed was too short to permit of their arrival. Julius had written himself alone, and the condition of the times rendered it inexpedient to travel. They stated with a certain amount of 'rancour and pride' that all bishops were equal in authority, and that the magnitude of their cities gave one no more authority than the others. (3) From these statements it is plain that they were ignorant of the prerogative which Julius *sought to claim* ~~sought~~ for Rome over Alexandria, and that they maintained that a valid council of their own at Antioch had pronounced a just judgment upon the whole matter. At Tyre previously, and again now at Antioch, Athanasius had been deposed. They ^{argued} ~~claimed~~ that ecclesiastical law was upon their side, and the breach of it had been committed by clerics, who received to communion bishops deposed by their full authority. Eusebius indeed stood for Constantinople, a capital of the East, in defiance of Rome and the claim of "the succession of St. Peter and the Apostles." (4) *and also of the civil authority by which Athanasius had been brought back to his See.*

The question has been raised, - had they actually convened a proper Synod at Antioch previous to the arrival of Gregory in Alexandria? We have seen that Bishop Julius certainly speaks of that prelate as ordained there, before being sent to his office.

(1) See in letter of Julius # 34 of Arian Apol. (2) ^{Euseb.} # 22. (3) See ed # 34 & 22.
(4) Julius letter uses this expression.

absence of a bishop from his diocese. We have reason to think that the Emperor of the East did not approve of the eighteen months' absence at Rome of the Alexandrian, since afterwards he accused him of plotting with his brother.⁽¹⁾ The noteworthy thing is how in regard to the case of Athanasius, the Eastern Church too prone always to subservience to Imperial authority, had begun to take a stand upon the strict inviolability of its judicial authority. Appeal to Caesar was not to be allowed, but appeal must be made to a higher or fuller Council. The West, as we shall see, took ~~later~~ similar action, but with another substitute for the Imperial ultimate appeal. The Easterns had no traditions of any single bishopric which they might exalt, ~~and~~ ^{and at this stage at least,} they were utterly set against having put over them, the authority of the Roman See.

The suspicion, of course, may remain that at the back of these movements lay as a supreme energising power the jealousy of Constantius against his brothers, and that the Eastern Churchmen, apparently so eager for ecclesiastical autonomy were all the time governed by Imperial suggestions. If however there is any evidence in the doctrinal position of this Council, it militates against this idea. We should have expected a Synod controlled by the Eastern Emperor to be vague in its theological statements, and the Synod of Antioch was conspicuously eager to free itself from the suspicion of seeking to gloss over the errors of Arius.

Athanasius saw, naturally, Arianizing motives in all that was done, but the Creeds of Antioch do not bear out his ⁽²⁾ ~~contention~~ ^{suspicion}. The bishops, indeed, took pains to protest against the idea, that men of their ecclesiastical weight and dignity, could be led into error by a mere Presbyter, such as Arius was. We shall judge better if we see in the condemnation of Athanasius, passed by this Council, not a wholesale defection of the East to Arianism, but a definite declaration against Roman dominance and also, which is

(1) See below. 2. For creeds of Antioch see Athan. De Synod. Arim. + Seleuc. § 22ff. They are not Arian but orthodox except in the eyes of those who identify orthodoxy with the use of the word, ὁμοούσιος.

for our purpose,
more important, against Imperial interference with the autonomy of the Eastern Church. Athanasius, for all his bold stand against Constantine the Great, ~~indeed~~ ^{perhaps} because of that stand and because it was with an Emperor that he had to deal in that struggle, had become to some extent obsessed by the Imperial authority. Undeniably he had appealed to Constantine the Great. He had accepted Constantine II's permission to return as ~~authority~~ ^{a mandate} to resume his office. Later, he would accept the power of Constans, to put him again into charge of his diocese. A great declaration of Church liberty, and the first important step of denying the Emperor as a final court of appeal to the clerics, came thus, to our surprise, from the formerly passive Church of the East. As Athanasius was strong on the non-intrusion of a priori ratiocination into matters of faith, so his opponents showed life on the question of non-intrusion into the independent polity of the Church.

The somewhat uncanonical action of the Eastern Church in introducing Gregory into Alexandria, had had a ~~parallel~~ ^{precedent} in the election of Eusebius to the bishopric of Constantinople. That great opponent of Athanasius now died, and what degree of merit does lie in the policy of doctrinal complaisance and tolerance, at least for the maintenance of good ~~order~~ ^{discipline}, might be seen ^{by contrast,} when his death was followed by extraordinary disorders. One party in the Church re-elected Paul, the other Macedonius and in the consequent commotion, many lives were lost. Constantius heard of this, and sent a decree for the expulsion of Paul. The Officer who executed the order was attacked. His house was burned, he himself killed, and his body dragged through the streets. The Emperor then came himself to punish this monstrous offence, and was met by a weeping and repentant populace. He expelled Paul, cut off the free corn-grants from the city, and though displeased with Macedonius left him in his office. ⁽¹⁾

(1) Socrates II. 12+13 (Sozomen. III. 4.)

There were ^{then} ~~thus~~ three important bishops in exile - Athanasius, Paul, and Marcellus of Ancyra. The last was deposed at the Synod held in Constantine's reign at Constantinople, but he alone was directly charged with heresy. Now, although these three made common cause; Athanasius seems to have suspected that Marcellus, a vigorous enough Anti-Arian, was very near to entertaining errors in the opposite direction. Bishop Julius espoused the cause of these clerics warmly, and while the Eastern bishops stood firmly against them, he had gathered a Council of Western clerics who extended to them the right hand of fellowship.

Thus we may see that we are not dealing with a division of the Church upon which orthodoxy can be claimed for one side exclusively. The existence of a man like Marcellus proved that the Eastern Anti-Sabellian fear of the implications of Homöousianism was not unjustified. Against the others their complaints were rather based upon actions which they had thought fit to take in the furtherance of their theological opinions. Paul may have been innocent in the matter of the assassination of the imperial official, and the harshness of Athanasius at Alexandria may have been exaggerated and the Prefect's violence wrongly attributed to him, ^{but} the authority of Rome over Alexandria⁽¹⁾ seemed very much a matter of dispute, and if that city ^{was, as Ancyra and Constantinople certainly were, within the Eastern jurisdiction,} ~~was rightly in Eastern jurisdiction,~~ then the case of the Churchmen in that part was constitutionally sound. Divisions were arising, ^{it is evident} ~~therefore~~, not on doctrinal opinion but actually because of the attempts of ecclesiastics to overrule one another, and their bitterness was accentuated by the fact that the officers of the Empire, even the Augusti, were at their disposal to ^{effect} ~~effect~~ their purposes. Thus the intensified policy of Church-support and patronage was rapidly leading the way to an open breach far more difficult to heal than

(1) Civilly Alexandria had always been directly under the Emperor of Rome. It was now in Constantine's jurisdiction obviously, but the Roman bishop apparently disregarded civil divisions and was ready to claim an ecclesiastical jurisdiction over every part which had any attachment to Rome.

those differences with which Constantine had had to deal. The excessive power which the Churchmen could wield in the State-support was the weapon with which it was cutting itself asunder.

Through the influence of Hosius and Fortunatian of Aquileia, Athanasius was summoned by the Emperor Constans to his court in the third year after his flight from Alexandria.⁽¹⁾ Constans then wrote to his brother suggesting that a Council representative of both parts of the Empire should be held to examine into his case and that of his fellow-bishops in exile. In accordance with this desire a Synod was summoned to enquire fully into the whole matter at Sardica.

Socrates, followed by Sozomen, dates this Council with great particularity in the year 347 A.D. We know, however, from other sources that Athanasius had returned to Alexandria before this date, namely in 346 A.D. The *Historia Acephala*, ~~anacephala~~, Jerome, and Festal Letter XIX are all proof of this fact. Moreover if, as Athanasius says, his summons to the Court of Constans took place in the third year from his flight which was in Holy Week 341, there is no reason to suppose that the summons of the Council was thereafter delayed for so long a period. We may thus suppose that the Synod of Sardica met in ~~346~~ ^{A.D. 343-344.} As we shall see this Synod sent envoys to Antioch who were received by a Council there famous for the authorship of the long creed, known as the Macrostich. This Macrostich we know on the authority of Liberius was presented in its turn at a Council of Milan in 345 A.D. for writing about 353, he speaks of this event as taking place eight years previously. ⁽²⁾ Thus we can with ^{tolerable} certainty date the Council of Sardica in 343-344 A.D. ⁽³⁾

This Council had to settle a matter of extraordinary delicacy. A bishop had been exonerated by one Synod and condemned by another ⁽⁴⁾ of almost contemporaneous date. The dangerous question of the authority of Rome lay before them, and also the critical point as to

(1) See Athan. Epist ad Constantium. § 3 & 4. (2) It is difficult to know what is meant by "three years later" in a writer like Athanasius. By ancient customs of calculation it would mean what we call "two years later." Cf. on the third day in New Testament. (3) Synod of Rome in name of wh. & for himself Julius wrote. (4) Antioch (Dedication) Both Synods early in 341 A.D.

whether the decision of one Council could be reviewed by another. The Eastern had laid down the thesis that a wider or higher council could review decisions and they were not averse therefore to full discussion at this Council, representative of East and West, of what had taken place at sectional Councils. What they were extremely sensitive about, however, was the least hint on the part of the Westerns that they had already retried the decisions of the East and reversed them. One cannot but acknowledge their right on this point, for the Council of Antioch was a full and important representation of Eastern Christianity, whereas the gathering of bishops with Julius, who addressed the letter already discussed, was a pro re nata assembly of little weight in the general history of Church Synods.

Perhaps a newly-born ^{and significant} dislike of magisterial and military interference, perhaps the delicacy of the political situation as between two different empires, secured freedom for this Council to meet without a representative of the imperial power. It would seem as if Athanasius had suggested this, for he emphasises it, as a point of the utmost importance, and ^{in his backward glance} ~~we remember that~~ at Tyre he ^{Saw reason to attribute} ~~attributed~~ to excessive military influence some of the injustice of ~~its~~ proceedings. His account of the ^{happenings} ~~proceedings~~ at Sardica is as follows:-(1)

"When the Council met without the Counts and no soldiers were permitted to be present, they (i.e. the Eastern bishops) were confounded and conscience-stricken, because they could no longer obtain what judgment they wished, but only such as truth and reason required. We, however, frequently repeated our challenge, and the Council of Bishops called upon them to come forward saying "You have come for the purpose of undergoing a trial, why then do you now withdraw yourselves? Either you ought not to have come, or having come, ought not to conceal yourselves. Such conduct will

G1 See Ahol. c. Arian. § 36.

prove your greatest condemnation. Behold Athanasius and his friends are here, whom you accused while absent. If therefore you think you have anything against them, you may convict them face to face. But if you pretend to be unwilling to do so, while in truth you are unable, you plainly show yourselves to be calumniators, and the Council will give sentence against you accordingly."

If it were in some such style as this that the representatives of the Eastern Church were addressed, we do not wonder that they withdrew as they did from the Council. The Western bishops thereafter received the accused to their defence and pronounced them "injured persons who had been falsely accused." They then addressed letters ⁽¹⁾ to the Churches everywhere and in particular to Alexandria - in which they set forth the innocence of these clerics and condemned unrestrainedly the leaders of the other party, including, it may be noted, almost all the notable bishops of the Eastern Church, Theodore of Heraclea, Narcissus of Cilicia, Stephen of Antioch, George of Laodicea, Acacius of Caesarea, Menophantes of Ephesus, and also Ursacius of Moesia, and Valens of Mursa. ⁽²⁾ Indeed only two Eastern commissioners, Macarius of Palestine and Asterius of Arabia, seem to have escaped their censure because they took the Western side in the debates. Gregory of Alexandria, and Macedonius of Constantinople, were deposed. We see thus that a very strong attack was made upon the Eastern Church by the clerics of the West. The former's representatives had not been received by the latter at the Council as those appearing on behalf of the decisions of an important Synod, but they had been treated as a cabal of conspirators. It is plain that they had come half in expectation of such treatment, and had resolved, on the first hint of such an attitude, to withdraw from the discussions. However, great our admiration for Athanasius as

(1) For letters see Hilary Fragment II. Theodoret II. 8. (2) Or Arius as this cleric is sometimes named.

a champion of truth, we must remember that this Synod was assembled for the purpose of reviewing a decision reached by a full Council of the East. That those about to judge and review these decisions should already have received the accused into communion, acting as if their Roman Synod's decision were the true and final one, might well be regarded by the Easterns as an unbearable slight.

Athanasius⁽¹⁾ gives the full list of the bishops who signed the Sardican finding. The meagre number of Eastern Sees represented is significant. He seems to feel this himself and states that many Eastern bishops supported him ^{in the time} previous to this Council. If so, it would seem evident that the personal question was now sunk in the dispute as to whether the Eastern Church must submit to the Western.

The Eastern bishops were said to be disconcerted by the absence of a Civil magistrate to rule proceedings. This may signify that they appealed for a legal and outside judgment upon the point as to whether Athanasius should sit as a member of council, when, from the Eastern view-point, he was a deposed bishop who had appealed for re-examination of his case. We see from the words of Athanasius quoted earlier that the Westerns took the point of view that he was at present in full orders and was now to be accused. The Alexandrian at Tyre had taken exception to the presence of Ischyra~~s~~ we remember, and said that he would have withdrawn at the beginning, had he been at liberty. The Easterns were thus acting on the same principles ^{now,} when they withdrew. ~~They~~ Indeed the Council seemed anxious as to whether they had kept within the law at this point, and they are careful in their letter to Julius⁽²⁾ to emphasise that they had permission from the Emperors to re-examine the whole case (Nam et ipsi religiosissimi imperatores permiserunt ut de integro universa discussa disputarentur).

A letter addressed to the Bishop of Rome would not refer to imperial

(1) Apol. c. Arian. § 50. Hilary Fragment. II. 15. (2) For letter see Hilary Frag. II. 11.

authority except where that was deemed to be valid, and hence we think we may argue in this reference and in the general attitude of the clerics here, that the principle of Constantine was more or less accepted, that a Count or civil president was of value to direct the Church Officials as to legalities. At all events it was admitted that, whether such were present or not, the Church Councils were subject to the general law of the land and must have authority from the Emperors or other representatives of that law for their doings, when there seemed difficulty in determining what was right. We cannot say that such a theory was definitely formed and stated, but we see evidence that they acted on some such understood principle of the relation of the Church to the Civil law.

(1)

The Easterns' statement of their position was made from Philippopolis where they assembled after their withdrawal from Sardica. They then said that no sooner had they heard that Athanasius, Marcellus, and the other justly condemned offenders were sitting with Hosius and the other bishops in Church than they demanded that they should be shut out. When this was done, they had said, discussion might take place on the decisions of the earlier councils. Hosius refused to listen, and they were troubled to tears. They could not, they said, sit in assembly with men whom their predecessors had deposed. Again and again, they repeated their demand, begging the Western party not to confound divine right, violate the traditions of the Church, and place the many Oriental bishops and Synods on a lower footing than their own party. The Hosians paid no heed to this plea, but rather took the attitude that the Eusebian party were on their trial for calumny. The Easterns then suggested a new and impartial commission to Alexandria to collect evidence as to action of Athanasius. This was refused. (2) They then announced their determination to withdraw. Hosius made every effort to prevent this. He promised that if Athanasius was

(1) Hilary Fragment III. (2) Cf. letter of Hosius. Athan. Hist. Arian. §44.

guilty he would be deposed at once, and even if innocent, should accompany himself to Spain instead of returning to Alexandria. They would not be reconciled however, and so departed. They issued their Encyclical ⁽¹⁾ from Philippopolis in name of the Council of Sardica, for from their point of view the Council which actually met at that place, was a mere cabal. It restated the case against Marcellus and Athanasius that the Western party had received them contrary to the Canon, ^{and} that a sentence of deposition pronounced by one Council could not be re-examined by another. They stated further that Paul of Constantinople and Marcellus of Ancyra had perpetrated horrible outrages upon priests of their cities mocking their rank and their sacred symbols by contemptuous and cruel assaults upon them. Orthodox bishops were charged by them with similar conduct at Gaza and Adrianople, where the Host, consecrated by priests, whom he excommunicated, had been thrown by Bishop Lucius to the dogs. In addition Athanasius was accused of setting fire to the Alexandrian Church himself, to prevent Gregory's admission. They further declared that they had ex-communicated the Western bishops.

Thus the Church was now divided in twain. We are told that the boundary of communion was Mt. Soucis between Thrace and Illyria, and thus the division between the empires was the line of cleavage. We dare not say, however, that the mere duality of emperors had produced this breach in the ecclesiastical body, for the civil division marked, of course, a natural division in the populace. We see however that the hopes of Constantine the Great, that the homogeneity of the Church might reconcile the difference of the two parts of the empire, had not proved sound. The Council of Nicaea had been a wise and statesman-like effort to secure unity, and it is curious to reflect that its decisions were in point of fact the very cause of the breach. Broadly speaking and ignoring

(1) *Preserved Hilary. Fragment III.*

personal jealousies, we can see that the decided fear of Pantheism in the East and its kindred Christian manifestation in Sabellianism prevented that ~~branch~~^{branch} of the Church from accepting wholeheartedly the Nicæan definition. If we examine the four creeds of the Antioch Synod (of the Dedication), we find a doctrine which cannot be called Arian, but which fears to condemn it in the open terms of Athanasianism because of the danger of the contrary doctrine. In all this controversy, the case of Marcellus, who was arraigned for heresy and that not without some justice, forces us to refrain from judging harshly those who in their own districts found his type of error the prevailing difficulty. Athanasius seems himself to have had doubts of Marcellus, but refrained from pronouncing against him because to him and the Westerns generally, Polytheism and its Christian manifestations in Subordinationism, Tritheism, and errors, similar to those of Arius, were regarded as the greater dangers. For those reasons and having no central binding authority, but being each supported sympathetically by their own emperor, they had divided themselves from communion with each other. The ready support of the magistrates ~~moreover had plainly~~^{moreover had plainly} fomented the dis-union. At Alexandria, Athanasius had come back with imperial sanction and heralded by display of violence on the part of the prefect. Gregory had entered into the bishopric conducted by soldiers and amid scenes of cruelty and outrage. At Constantinople Paul had used the civil power against those whom he excommunicated. The dispute between Macedonius and Paul had led to open rioting and ^{to} the murder of the imperial officer. The power of the State, too freely at the disposal of the Church, had embittered the quarrel and taken it out of the reign of theological debate into that almost of civil strife. With weapons such as banishment, fierce attack, and persecution at their disposal, the peaceful atmosphere of a mere ecclesiastical dispute could not be maintained. The following events showed that the

State forces were so absolutely at the call of the ecclesiastics that even war might be imminent. In such circumstances the controversy came at last not to be one of theology, or of the deposition or acquittal of this bishop or that, but a question of the prestige and independence of East and West. Racial rivalry entered into it, and a definite separation occurred which, while it might not be long lasting, proved that in the issue such uniformity, as the mind of Constantine, thinking in terms of empire, had conceived for the Church, was not to be the form in which her catholic unity was to be expressed, if indeed it was destined to find expression at all, *and that the weapon of the civil power was a dangerous one in the Church's hands and one with which she was inflicting wounds upon herself.*

CHAPTER X.

DOMINANT INFLUENCE OF CONSTANS AND ITS EFFECTS.



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DOMINANT INFLUENCE OF CONSTANS AND ITS EFFECTS.

A definite breach had thus come between Eastern and Western Christianity, and the two parties took vigorous steps to preserve within their borders their homogeneity. Macarius and Asterius, who had gone over to the Western side at Sardica, were deposed by the Eastern brethren; and lest Athanasius or Paul should venture to attempt to return to their charges, a strict watch was kept on the ports by officials, who had authority ^{it is alleged,} to execute these bishops on sight. The Western Church was able, nowever, even more effectively to make good her position. She had apparently so much the ear of her emperor that he exerted the utmost power which he had on her behalf. Constantius was no doubt heartily in favour of his Eastern bishops, and at a later stage he would show how far he was prepared to go on their behalf, but Persian wars had crippled his resources too much for him to court any issue with his more prosperous and powerful brother. The Sardican Council sent the customary and expected envoys to the Eastern emperor, to inform him of their finding with regard to the accused bishops. It is unlikely that in itself the message would ever have received attention. The envoys came to Antioch where the Emperor then was, and Stephanas, the Bishop of that city, in the exercise of his very coarse wit, played upon one of them a trick of unparalleled indecency. There was ^{chance, we} little hope that his rough humour would ^{have passed} ~~be~~ unpunished in ordinary times, as even ecclesiastical rancour could not blind his emperor and fellow bishops to the unseemliness of such conduct in one of his office. It was peculiarly ill-timed, however, in view of the grave communications which those deputies had brought with them. (1)

One of these was a letter from Constans to his brother, in which

(1) For letter see Socrates II. 22.

after the usual greetings, he is reported to have said:-

"Athanasius and Paul are herewith me; and I am quite satisfied after strict investigations that their piety alone has drawn persecution upon them.. If, therefore, you will pledge yourself to reinstate them in their Sees, and to punish those who have injured them, I will send them to you, but shall you refuse to execute my wishes be assured of this, that I will come thither and restore them to their own Sees in spite of your opposition."

It might be questioned indeed if these words were the exact forms of expression which the Western Emperor used to his brother, but there seems little doubt that such was the burden of his communication. Constantius admitted afterwards that only the desire to remain on friendly terms with his brother could have induced him to tolerate the return of Athanasius, and a bold bishop did not hesitate even to use the word, "fear", in this connection to his face. Fear there well might be, for the disputed cities, Alexandria and Constantinople, lay conveniently for a Western Emperor's schemes of annexation, and he had already in the matter of Constantine's invasion added richly to his original inheritance without offering the East any share of the spoil. We need not be astonished that the Churchmen should allow a threat even of civil war to be preferred in their interest, as both sides had made free use of the civil and military power locally, and this was a mere extension of a means apparently already highly approved of. We may not of course credit Constantius with an entirely humble subservience to priestly wishes. He was no doubt well enough pleased to make a bid for extension of his empire if need be, and probably guessed that his threat would be effectual to secure compliance.

Thus Stephanas was deposed for his lewd buffoonery and the same Council which dealt with him took serious thought of the situation before them. They judged that it would be foolish on

this account to undergo the horrors of civil war, and accordingly
 Constantius wrote ⁽¹⁾ letters of recall to the exiled bishops. Some
 authorities say to all, and it is certain that more than Paul and
 Athanasius were so favoured. ⁽²⁾ The letter recalling the latter
 has been preserved. Its flowery opening reminds us that the
 Emperor prided himself upon his eloquence. It reveals too the
 insincerity of his character. "Our benignant clemency will not
 suffer you any longer to be tempest-tossed by the wild waves of the
 sea; for our unwearied piety has not lost sight of you, while you
 have been bereft of your native home, deprived of your goods, and
 have been wandering in the savage wilderness. And although I
 have, for a long time, deferred expressing by letter the purpose
 of my mind concerning you, principally because I expected that you
 would appear before us of your own accord, etc.etc."

So he gently scolded the bishops' fearfulness, although ^{perhaps} ~~even~~
^{he} knew that the ports had been watched and that execution on sight had
 been authorised. It is not surprising that, even with this
 invitation, Athanasius still hesitated to return. Not until he had
 received a third letter did he set upon his way. By this time
 Bishop Gregory had died, and so the door was open to his episcopate.
 Accordingly he left his place of exile and went up to Rome, receiv-
 ing letters from the Bishop, and passing on in a triumphal procession
 of congratulations towards the Emperor at Antioch. There he was
 received with outward friendliness. A compromise had been
 reached in the East which would have been odious to the ideas of
 Constantine, namely that the anti-Homoousians in different parts
 should have their own bishop. Macedonius was so established
 in Constantinople along with Paul. The Emperor made the
 courteous request to Athanasius that a Bishop for those out of
 his communion might be established at Alexandria, but when he
 boldly, but with equal courtesy, asked for a similar favour on

(1) Socrat. III. 20. (2) Socrates enumerates besides Marcellus, Athanasius & Paul,
 Lucius of Adrinople, & Arcelaps of Gaza. Macarius & Asterius are not mentioned
 as being reinstated.

(1) behalf of the Homoiousians at Antioch, the matter was dropped.

Athanasius departed on his way to Alexandria with commendatory letters from the Emperor. He made a tour of the Holy Land upon his way and was received everywhere, even by those who had been hostile to his principles, with an affection which he seems to have won by his own personal merit. A Synod of Jerusalem added their quota to the congratulatory letters he carried to his own diocese. He had the knowledge that the documents connected with previous trials were all destroyed by the Imperial command, and that the decision of Tyre was almost universally acknowledged to have been unjust. As he came, however, to Alexandria, the scene adopted the form of a triumphant ovation, ^{as} such few emperors had ever enjoyed. (2) The high orders had been that he should be received cordially, and the populace had been warned that the magistrates had full power to deal severely with any suggestion of malicious excitement or sedition; but if any murmured, their voices were drowned in the general acclamations of the enthusiastic supporters of the persecuted bishop. We may let him tell the story in his own words:— (3) "Of the bishops of Egypt and the Libyan provinces, of the laity, both of these countries and of Alexandria, it is superfluous for me to speak. They all ran together and were possessed with unspeakable delight Great was their joy, the people in the congregation encouraging one another to virtue. How many unmarried women, who were before ready to enter upon marriage, now remained virgins to Christ! How many young men, seeing the example of others, embraced the monastic life! How many fathers persuaded their children, and how many were urged by their children, to submit themselves to Christian discipline! How many widows and orphans - now through the zeal of the people - were no longer

(1) Socrates II. 23. Soz. III. 20. (2.) The Letter of Constantine is preserved Apol. contra Arian. § 66. (3) Athan. Hist. Arian. § 25.

hungry and went forth clothed! You would have thought every family and every house, a Church, by reason of the goodness of its inhabitants and the prayers offered to God. And in the Churches there was a profound and wonderful peace, while the Bishops wrote from all quarters, and received from Athanasius the customary letter of peace."

To do Athanasius justice he would have desired when before Constantius at Antioch, to meet with his accusers and have settled, once for all, the questions at issue between them. Nevertheless he rejoiced with great satisfaction in his return to Alexandria profoundly unaware apparently that, from the point of view which denied the West ~~any~~ superiority to the East, his arrival there was as great an intrusion as that of Gregory, of which he had so bitterly complained. Perhaps his extended tour of the Eastern provinces was intended to allay this feeling, and to do away with that sort of odium which might attach to one whom an alien emperor had thrust upon an unwilling Church. The welcome of his own people was genuine, but many greetings of these days, he might feel, and in particular those of Constantius were utterly insincere. At

Alexandria good might result from restoration of a beloved spiritual leader to his flock, but the auspices were dangerous. ^{The imperial} ~~letter had silenced disorder beforehand but otherwise the story of Gregory~~ ~~to the result if an Arianising Emperor chose to exert so his supreme~~ ~~and Philagrius was repeated. Had the canons to which Julius had appealed~~ ~~power against the Orthodox?~~

given any warrant for such procedure?

Meantime truce prevailed. The bishops who came with this extraneous support were left ^{in peace,} ~~alone~~ and each division of the Church pursued its characteristic life and met its local difficulties.

The East as usual carried on its furious thinking in theological matters. Characteristically they had not met at Antioch to depose ^{Stephanas} ~~Stephen~~, without consideration of the question of the Creed. (1) Athanasius tells us, at least, that a Synod three years after that of Antioch (Dedication) drew up the Creed, the "Macrostich", and this

(1) De Synod. Arimin. et Seleuc. § 26.

must have been either the Synod of Philippopolis or that of Antioch ⁽²⁾ ~~which met almost immediately after it.~~
 (re ~~Stephen~~ ^{Stephanus}) In the Encyclical letter from Philippopolis (headed Sardica) the Creed is that of Antioch (Dedication), the fourth made by that Synod. We may see therefore in the elaborate and lengthy formula called by this name such a strong effort after agreement as Constans' letter might ~~arouse~~ ^{arouse;} nor need we suppose that the Church was conscienceless in the matter of so serious a division as had occurred in her midst. It was sent to the West, with able exponents, for approval, and it is regrettable that it did not receive more consideration. It was no mere politic creed of the type which Eusebius of Nicomedia used to advocate, but was a painstaking effort to think out the subject. Its avowed purpose was that the inhabitants of the West might know the ecclesiastical position of the East, especially that they might be cleared of "the strange suspicion respecting their faith." They evidently sought to get rid of this misunderstanding by very sincere labour at the task of defining Trinitarian truth. The deputies who carried this Macrostich to the West were Demophilus, Macedonius, Eudoxius and ⁽³⁾ Martyrius, and some one of these was no doubt the author.

In earlier times the Eastern Church which contained the greater bulk of clerics of philosophical training had provided the ~~greatest~~ ^{strongest} support for the doctrines of Arianism. When led by such bishops as Eusebius they had deemed the stressing of their principles impolitic and laboured for unity rather than for clear definition. Such a type of policy would re-assert itself again when imperial influence became again a dominant factor of church-life, but at present, pursuing their own free lines of development they were for the most part eager to reach and to formulate theological truth with all clearness. They still, however, fought with the bug-bear of Sabellianism and avoided the word, Homöousios. On this account the Western clerics did not receive the painstaking effort of the Macrostich as it deserved. When the Macrostich was presented,

- (1) It is necessary to distinguish the Synods at Antioch in this way. The Synod of Antioch (Dedication) is that which ordained Gregory to Alexandria of date 341 A.D. The Synod which deposed Stephen & received the envoys of Constans authors as we conclude of the Macrostich met according to our dating in 346 A.D. almost immediately after Sardica. (2) Hilary III. 29 Fragments. (3) Iriberius gives the names in letter. Hilary Frag. V

moreover, at the Synod of Milan (345 A.D.), the important business was being transacted of negotiating for the reception of Ursacius and Valens into the Church. These clerics had found it necessary to anathematize Arius and his heresies, and the authors of the Macrosthich were now asked to prove their good faith by doing the like. Either piqued at being treated as if they were penitents craving favour from the West, or perhaps vexed at the stupidity of being asked to repeat what they had already said in a superabundance of words, they withdrew with feelings of bitterness. (1) Thus though Athanasius was restored to his See, the peace was merely that of Imperial will, and no true unity had been reached.

The Western Church it must now be noted, was, with the powerful influence of Constans behind her, inheriting some of the spiritual deterioration which follows such patronage. A Synod held at Carthage, for example, by its canons gives us an indication of some of the corruptions which were creeping into the African Church. We have seen that the new emperors greatly extended the privileges and tax-immunities of the clergy. Some of these benefits, ^{as these canons show, were} ~~proved~~ ^{proving} dangerous to their continued discharge of their proper spiritual work. The remission of the Trading Tax induced some of them to engage too freely in secular business, and others sought clerical office merely to set free their commercial interests for these burdens. (3) Jealousy and pride were, ^{apparently also} becoming too common features in the clergy and had to be dealt with, and bad faith existed between individuals among them. Some even had taken to the practice of usury, ~~so liberally were they supported and subsidised in communities of the wealthy subsidised clergy in the midst of a society which~~ ^{for we have a regulation against this, a vivid glimpse is afforded thus} languished under heavy burdens of taxation. Coupling those indications with the known fact that shortly after the Synod of Sardica, Constans is known to have sent so rich a present to African clergy as to cause an outbreak of dissension in that province, we may conclude that this emperor, who had not hesitated to issue an

- (1) Iriberius loc. cit. (2) Held about 345 A.D. See for canons Mansi - t. III. 143.
 (3) Canon X of Council of Sardica against men passing too quickly into the bishopric may note the same corruption.

ultimatum of war in a Church dispute, was now attempting to aggrandize the Church on a scale even more munificent than that of his father. Obviously also these extravagant privileges were not of real help to the Church but secularised it in outlook and in ideal. It became to many no true nursery of piety. Especially the stern schismatics of Africa resented this lavish generosity to the already wealthy clerics.

(1)

Constantine and the Donatists had parted on terms of mutual contempt. That emperor had exhorted the Catholics to patience; and so the matter had remained. The Donatist bishop and his followers excommunicated the Catholics, and ~~even~~ went so far as to count none of their ordinances valid, not even baptism. Constans had apparently not been content to leave matters so. He had attempted a policy which was original in itself. In 340 he published an edict urging the Donatists to return to the Church, pleading Christ's love of unity, and at the same time ordering his commissioners, Ursacius and Leontius, to distribute gifts lavishly among them as well as among the other Christians of the Province. (2) Such a method, however, was not likely to be successful with those men. They spurned the bribe, and refused to conform to the Church which was wont to receive such favours gladly. Donatus, the Great, was still their bishop, and his name became a rallying call for many malcontents in the surrounding districts. The Emperor, piqued at the refusal of his generous gift, made the fatal error of attempting by force to reduce the spirit of these men, and to close up their Churches. He soon found that he had provoked a greater spirit of antipathy to the Catholics. The Circumcellions, a party of mendicant monks whose only support was the alms of country-cottars ("cellas circumientes rusticorum") became a military band, under the title of "Soldiers of Christ" who with the aid of the peasantry carried on an active warfare upon the heathen and Catholic Christians.

(1) Optatus ed. Dupin Paris 1700 on Donatists. (Augustine Epp. espec. 43 + 88 (ed. Jods) Opera contra Donatistas.) Migne Patrol. Cours. Vol VIII (Constantine) includes pp 674 ff. Monumenta Vetera ad hist. Donatist. pertinentia.
(2) See Sermo cujusdam Donatisti Migne p. 450.

They counted martyrdom a prize, and so were brave to recklessness. ~~and further~~ ^{they} had little mercy for all who fell victims to their attack. Bishop Donatus and his clergy did not entirely support the violent, and indeed cruel, methods of these fanatical warriors, but they could not restrain their head-strong allies. Constans' attempts at coercion were thus met with the most violent resistance and those who fell victims were honoured as martyrs and held up as worthy of all emulation.

Five years later a second attempt at conciliation was made. Another official ⁽¹⁾ came to Africa loaded with alms and Church-decorations to lure the supporters of Donatus from his side. The latter published letters warning the faithful of this underhanded attempt upon their loyalty. He was a man of unquestionable integrity, eloquent and able, but hard, proud and overbearing. His letter shows great command of abuse and indecent slander. His severity in the interests of a pure Church did not extend apparently to the smaller graces of the Christian Ethic, but every degree of bitterness entered into his judgments and his treatment of opponents. When therefore after the Sardican Council the Emperor by the hand of a special deputy, Macarius, offered to them rich gifts and expressed his willingness to aid them in every way, Donatus replied, "What has the Emperor to do with the Church?" This saying was eagerly caught up by his followers at that time. The view was circulated that the Catholic Church had "committed fornication with the princes of this world" and her prelates were derided as the Emperor's minions. Then a rebellion broke out based on ideas of a completely democratic type, drawn from the social implications of Christianity. Africa was to all showing in a miserable condition of poverty, and the Circumcellions did not shrink from declaring all slaves free and all debtors released from their debts. Places of worship, courts of justice and travellers on the high roads were all in-

(1) *Gregorius.*

Heathen temples seem to have ^{been} favorite place for assault and ~~indifferently attacked, and to slay a supposed enemy or to be slain~~
^{and} in the holy cause, ^{death was prized} ~~by the fierce "soldiers of~~
 Christ." Not content with these means they even threw themselves down from the pinnacles of rocks, carried away by a frenzied spirit. It would seem as if hatred of worldliness in Church and social life had turned into a veritable lust for death. The exaggerated spirit was no doubt due partly to the cruelty used by Macarius in seeking to repress this rebellion. He did not discriminate between moderate Donatist and extreme Circumcellion, but crushed all with ^{equal} ~~terrible~~ severity. St. Augustine at a later period had to ask that the excesses of both sides should be forgiven. Order was restored at last at terrible cost in blood, and the antagonism between the two sections of Christianity was made deeper than ever. More than ever the Donatists despised those who had acquiesced in their wholesale martyrdom, ignoring their offices and treating them as heathen or worse.

~~We may connect some important features of this rising with the~~
~~This rising is of course tremendously significant of the~~
~~Church's excessive use of the means of wealth.~~
~~Church's resistance of secularisation.~~ It is to be noted that we have not merely a revolt against interference with ecclesiastical order and law, but against corruption by excessive gift and privilege, of the distinctive life of the Christian. The time was not yet when a social revolution could be understood or even could understand itself, but there is a parallel to the insurrection of peasants in the time of Luther, and an unmistakable expression of the social Gospel of Christianity in opposition to a rich and privileged Church. The Egyptian monk sought the desert, the Circumcellion lived on alms, and the Donatist flung back the Emperor's gifts with contempt, all expressing an acute perception, that pampered and wealthy Churches, especially in the midst of general poverty, could not express the mind of their Master.

The Donatists too are of importance to the understanding of the

Church's own internal attitude to its affairs. From their point of view they were not schismatics. They were the Church of Christ. It did not dismay them that they were only a small body in Africa. Like the Scottish prophet, Peden, each would scarcely have feared to be alone, the only representative of the true faith. St. Augustine developed in combat with them at a later period, the historical idea of the Church, in contrast to their subjective view of it. So at an earlier time the controversy influenced their opponents to define more clearly for themselves what the Church was. Cyprian in controversy with similar types of thought had developed the idea of the episcopate and its orderly succession. In these days the Roman bishopric was the idea emphasised. At Sardica⁽¹⁾ moved by the events in connection with the sudden intrusion of Gregory into the See of Athanasius, the clerics had enacted that a deposed bishop who felt he had a good cause might appeal, out of reverence for the memory of St. Peter, to the Roman bishop who might either ratify the deposition or summon a Council, and that the vacant bishopric should remain unfilled until the Roman See had given its verdict. The following Canon of the Council took into account the many appeals which were being made especially by "the Africans who do not accept the wholesome doctrine of Bishop Gratus,"⁽²⁾ i.e. the Donatists^{and their sympathisers,} and forbade in future all appeals to the Emperor except through the Bishop of Rome. These regulations are valuable indications of the policy which the Western Church was forming with a view to adjusting its relations with the Emperor. The Eastern Church had forbidden appeal from clerics to the Emperor, and indicated a way of procedure by means of higher and fuller Councils. The Donatists, who once had favoured the action of seeking redress from the Civil Court, had now enunciated the principle that the Emperor had nothing to do with the Church. They relied altogether on a subjective principle of her identity, and were content, without

(1) For Canon of Sardica See Mansi Vol. II or Neale's Councils Quarta. II. 109.

~~(2) From their principles they would not probably appeal to the Emperor at this stage for ecclesiastical reasons but~~ (2) These appeals were probably connected with the persecutions, i.e. the customary appeal ad misericordiam which clerics could make. One cannot imagine that at this time they would give countenance to imperial authority by appealing on purely ecclesiastical issues.

Sirmium. They had taken special care to do so, since as a pupil of Marcellus of Ancyra, his false opinions might be regarded as having a bearing upon the question of that bishop's orthodoxy, and indeed, in their view, upon the whole issue. The Westerns desirous of supporting Marcellus had paid little attention to the strictures upon Photinus, ⁽¹⁾ but two years after this Synod, at another Synod at Milan, (Hilary is voucher for the date), they gave due consideration to his errors and reported their opinion of them to the East. If this was a sign of peace, further evidence of this spirit might be found in the fact that at this Council Valens and Ursacius whose admission had before been discussed were now fully accepted into communion. These clerics, however, said later that they were merely the victims of force upon the part of Constans, and their acceptance showed little approach ~~in~~ in ideas as they were only received after very full apologies to Athanasius and strong repudiations of all Arian tendencies. It would rather seem that they were only accepted on definitely breaking with the East, for their letter ⁽²⁾ to Julius contains a promise that they would not, without his permission, obey any summons of any Eastern bishop in connection with their apology and retractation. Nevertheless the correspondence regarding Photinus was an admission by the Westerns that on a previous point of discussion the Easterns had been in the right. It was two years before the Eastern Church responded to this condemnation, and met at Sirmium to depose Photinus from his throne. This ⁽³⁾ would bring us to the date 349 A.D. The Synod of that date had a characteristically full exposition of the creed we may suppose. Hilary gives us part of the formula, and it is evident that it is ⁽⁴⁾ not the Creed of the Synod of Sirmium which is better known, dated 351 A.D. by Socrates and Sozomen. Hilary condemns this 349 Creed as full of poison and deceit, but his chief objection was probably to the complaints against Marcellus and Athanasius which followed

(1) Hilary Fragment. II. (2) Letter in A/Exan. Apol. c. Arian. § 58.
 (3) Hilary. II. 20. Fragmenta. (4) For Creed of Sirmium 351 A.D. see Hilary De Synod. § 38. The Creed of Sirmium 349 A.D. (acc. to our dating) is in Hilary Fragmenta. II. 24.

it.

Photinus at all events had exaggerated the errors of Marcellus and apparently both he and Marcellus were deposed at this time. Athanasius, though spoken of, was left alone probably as admittedly orthodox, or as too dangerous to tamper with. Photinus was however popular, and he made use of the troublous days, when the revolt of Magnentius put the Empire into some confusion, to retain his See. (1)

It is impossible to determine whether Constans was living or dead at the time of this first Council of Sirmium.

It was, however, just shortly after this time that, at this very city, Constantius dealt his great oratorical blow which dispossessed Vetranio of the purple. Accordingly it would be under his auspices that the more important Council of Sirmium met, dated 351 A.D. by Socrates and Sozomen. (2) He is credited with paying special attention to this Synod, although the errors of Photinus can scarcely have affected him at this important juncture in his career, when he was preparing himself to meet the usurper Magnentius, with the reward of sole empire for victory. Are we to say that the elaborate creed of Sirmium, pronounced by Hilary to be so nearly orthodox, so careful and learned a statement on the subject of

~~Trinitarianism,~~
~~Trinitarian truth,~~ was the wily Emperor's attempt to win the Churchmen of the West to his side while he threw his forces into a fierce

battle for the conquest of Magnentius? *Such a policy was of course*

possible, but when he came to power, we would have expected a continuance
~~Emperor's creeds which were afterwards produced in profusion all~~
~~of it, and, as we shall see, he reverted then to the older plan and~~
~~suffered, either from a definite Arian taint in his beliefs or from~~

~~-idea~~ *vague inclusive*
~~a mistaken notion~~ that a ~~politic~~ formula was still the wisest

solution of the problem. This creed of Sirmium is much more probably to be set down as an effort at spontaneous thinking on the part of Eastern clerics. It contained the line of development of the Macrosthich and may be regarded as the last achievement of that interim period when, shocked perhaps at the cleavage of the Church,

(1) Socrat. II. 29. (2) Socrat. III. 30 Sij. IV. 6. Their statements regarding its findings must be on the evidence of Hilary far out.

and smarting under the imputation of heterodoxy, the Eastern Church developed their theological opinions with such fulness and care that a complete understanding was almost on the point of being reached.

The fact that Hilary can almost accept it, reveals to us that a solution of past difficulties was just on the point of being made. In a very short time ^{some such reconciling} ~~the~~ distinction ^{as that between} ~~between~~ ^{ὁμοστασις} and ^{ὁμοία} might have been stated, had the Churchmen been left to their own devices. Constantius was, however, now sole Emperor. Soon the clerics now engaged in solving their own difficulties were to find the issues confused by the attempts of Imperial domination, pursuing its political aims, which would seek another way out of the difficulty and one not in consonance with the Church's own spontaneous effort after accuracy of theological definition.

CHAPTER XI.

CONSTANTIUS AS SOLE EMPEROR.

IMPERIAL CREED-MAKING AND THE CHURCH'S ATTITUDE.



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CHAPTER XI.

CONSTANTIUS AS SOLE EMPEROR.

IMPERIAL CREED-MAKING AND THE CHURCH'S ATTITUDE.

Constantius who was now sole Emperor is generally credited by historians with a personal favouring of Arianism. It is doubtful if he had, however, a definite conception of his own upon the question at issue. We find at least an amount of wavering in his patronage of different types of thought, which preclude us from thinking that his discernment in these departments was very acute. He was anxious, however, for unity and his search was for a formula which would secure it. In this aim he was not attracted towards such efforts as the Macrosthich or Creed of Sirmium, apparently judging that in something simpler and less prolix a way of peace was to be found. In this he was mistaken, and his tireless efforts for a concise yet vague reconciling formula brought the greatest discredit upon himself in relation to the Churchmen and upon the Church herself. If he had any faith, one would judge that it was but little removed from paganism, at least in its ethical conceptions. He was, however, for the most part guided by ^{certain of} his clergy, and in consequence his own tendencies are not greatly in evidence. As was natural he took the Eastern view of the situation, and as Constantine ^{with Western bias} had rendered ~~that~~ ^{the other} section of Christian thought almost silent at Nicaea, so he thought now to force the West into submission. His person ^{however} did not inspire the reverence which his father had been able to inspire, nor did his ~~deeds~~ provide the motive of gratitude which had tolerated the former Imperial dominance in Church affairs. He, himself, moreover conducted his policy with such tactless masterfulness that he caused ideas of religious liberty to be formulated with ~~increased emphasis,~~ ^{increasing emphases,} and, in the issue, completely alienated the

outstanding bishops of all parts of his dominions.

From the beginning he revealed that he intended to take a strong hand in the government of the Church. The motives of his earliest actions are not difficult to discover. The personal factor bulks largely in all men's prespective, and so Athanasius (1) may be pardoned for thinking that the Emperor's plan of campaign was to leave him personally friendless and defenceless by removing all his supporters from office. A cleric, however, who caused more acute jealousy to the Emperor's heart than the Alexandrian bishop was the Roman prelate. Bishop Julius had died in 352 A.D. He had taken opportunity to enlarge his sphere of influence, and was plainly by his letters one of those bishops of Rome who have built up piece by piece the theory of the papacy by their strength of mind and ability to take command of the Church in her times of difficulty. He had now as successor, Liberius, a man to all present appearance as vigorous of will as his predecessor, and at the beginning of his episcopate, still clothed, as it were, with the mantle of Julius. Constantius viewing him and his office might discern another Emperor and one more difficult to overcome than the mere usurper. In the presence of a man in his powerful position, the Eastern ruler was left weak in seeking to govern Western thought. Constantius was personally not guided now by any bishop of ^{the} ~~A~~ type ^{of} ~~as~~ even Eusebius of Nicomedia, who, for all his jealousy, loose theological opinions, and eager desire for self-advancement, had at least some perception of the Church's honour and liberty of self government. His advisers were laymen and indeed menials such as the Eunuch Eusebius, a man utterly dishonest and low-minded, and among the clergy, turncoats such as Valens, flatterers such as Epictetus, typical Court favourites such as Eudoxius, or Acacius. The humiliation put by the Western clerics upon the Eastern Church would be represented to him in its coarsest aspects by such advisers. He had, moreover, a political bias against Rome. He forbade appeal to its civil courts⁽²⁾ and later would not allow any of its senators to live in the city⁽³⁾. In this he had certainly

(1) Hist. Arian. 7 4th.
 (2) Cod. Theod. XI Tit. 30. 2 2nd.
 (3) Loc. cit. VI. tit. 4 1 10.

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motives connected with the difficulty of administration. On him lay the difficult task of making the Byzantine metropolis secure ~~most coarse aspect by such Counsellors, and his first design seems~~ in its status. It was doubtless part of this policy which led him to seek ~~to have been~~ to establish his ascendancy and power over that ~~branch~~ Western ecclesiastical stronghold, as it was part of his character to try ~~of the Church, and~~ to effect it by all manner of low intrigues and underhand devices.

Athanasius was in his hand from the moment of Constans' death but his case was at first used rather as a convenient "casus belli" over which he might wrestle a fall with the Bishop of Rome, and whereby he might revenge himself for the humiliation of Antioch. ~~upon the Western clerics~~ A change of any sort could not have taken place without renewal of accusations against Athanasius. Accordingly we find that before the Emperor had established himself in security upon the throne a number of charges had been made against him. We remember that the old documents had been by Constantius' own orders destroyed, but he had contracted since his return more odium and this time of a ~~much~~ more dangerous kind than ever. He enumerates ^{the accusations} ~~them~~ in his apology which he prepared to deliver before the Emperor. (1) They were all of lèse-majesté, and were that he had been a cause of trouble between the brother Emperors, that he had sided with Magnentius, the usurper, that he had just entered into and used, without waiting until the Emperor had dedicated it, a new great Church at Alexandria, and that, when summoned to the Emperor's presence, he had refused to obey. The accusations were not altogether easy to meet. He had never conspired, of course with Magnentius, (2) but as that charge lingers on ⁱⁿ the fabled ~~story~~ of "George and the Dragon", it represents perhaps the popular feeling towards him on the part of the Easterns at the time of the war with the usurper. It means probably that against him as a man of Western sympathies the vulgar rumours, bred of a war-spirit, levelled such libels, and such are hard to refute or to live down. Innocent as he ^{might be of direct dealing in} ~~was in general of~~ Court intrigues, it was notorious

- (1) *Apol. ad Constantium.* (2) All that we know authentically of Magnentius is that he permitted night-sacrifices (*Cod. Theod. xvi. Tit. 8. 5.*) There would be nothing in him that could attract Athan. so favoured by Constans, his victim.

that he had nearly brought about a war between the Emperors. He had opened a new Church under necessity, but he had not dedicated it himself, and he yet awaited in hopes that Constantius would perform the formal ceremony. As for his summons this appears to have been a discreditable trick of some person at Court. A forged letter had been sent in his name to the Emperor asking permission to appear, or the Emperor pretended to have received such a request, and sent him a gracious consent. He replied, stating his willingness to come, but making plain that he had asked no such favour. This was made equivalent to a refusal to an imperial summons. It was evident that while all previous charges were such as Constantius might judge impartially, these were of the very sort which his temperament rendered him incapable of considering without suspicion and fury. Moreover the ^{reasonable} nature which these charges now took, gives one cause to suspect the hidden hand of the Emperor himself, or at least of his Court favourites. Athanasius was popular, beloved, ^{and something of} a national hero to the native Egyptian people. (1) The public welcome which he had received was a thing which made the ovations given to Emperors small in comparison. His was typical of the position of a metropolitan bishop, where character and worth accompanied the high office, and Constantius may have been jealous. His power and influence might easily cause such a feeling in one naturally prone to suspect all who possessed these qualities. Moreover there was the humiliation of having had to accept him at the bidding of Constans and the realisation, that his was the case over which his Eastern bishops had been slighted by the proud Westerns. Athanasius himself, as the defence which he prepared to deliver to the Emperor proves, had no ecclesiastical pride, but took always a surprisingly humble attitude towards royalty. The haughtier spirit of the Roman clerics, however, was the atmosphere in which the Emperor approached the consideration of his case, and might harden

(1) His return to Alexandria gave evidence of his popularity with the Christians (see above) and the means taken to secure the peace of the heathen Ceter at the time of George's introduction to the bishopric speak of a general favour even among those outside the Church, but opinion was of course in both divided as the anti-Homoionianists riots show on the latter occasion.

him against one, to whom he had been courteous and forbearing enough, when in his presence.

There was no occasion yet for Athanasius to speak to his defence, for the accusations had been forwarded to the Bishop of Rome, by Oriental and Egyptian bishops. Why they should have been sent to that dignitary, we do not know. He, Liberius, had called a Council of Italian clerics to consider them, and had sent a reply. They had received at the same time a letter from eighty ^{Egyptian} ~~Italian~~ bishops denying these charges, and the Roman had naturally supported the majority. The Orientals had then accused him of suppressing their charges and he had sought to obtain wider consideration, and had asked that a Council should be held. Accordingly the Emperor, now free to consider the matter, called a Synod at Arles to which the Roman bishop had sent all the documents, although he himself was not present. At this Synod which we may date 353 A.D. Constantius himself presided with Ursacius and Valens as assistants. ⁽¹⁾ The bishops had suggested that first Arianism should be repudiated, but, by the Emperor's fiat, theological discussion was forbidden. The acts of the Council of Arles have not come down to us. At this point Hilary began his history, but it survives merely in fragments. He records however that Paulinus of Treves refused to put anything before creed. There seemed to be a temper in the air willing to condemn Athanasius if Nicene orthodoxy were secured. Whatever else was said or done it is plain that the Emperor spoke in no measured terms of the absent bishop, Liberius, probably because his legates were firm for the principle of not discussing the accusations until the creed of all present was put beyond suspicion.

Our chief source of information about Arles is a letter of ⁽²⁾ Bishop Liberius addressed to Constantius after its meeting, deprecating the calling of another Synod which was then the Emperor's intention. It is a document of some importance. In it he took up the Emperor's strictures upon himself. He would have him

(1) See Sulpicius Severus. II. 39. (2) The letter is in Hilary Fragments. V.

understand that he ^{was} ~~is~~ a lover of peace, of true peace, not ^{one founded} ~~one consisting~~ ^{upon} ~~of~~ words hiding a fallacy, but confirming the Gospel truths. He explained the steps which had led him to ask for a Council as we have set them forth above, and declared his innocence in the whole matter. He was not one anxious for rule and authority. He had renounced all earthly things. He was not guilty of rashness or anger, of boasting or love of glory. He had taken his office unwillingly. He had added nothing to it, nor allowed anything to be taken away from it.

All this is excellent evidence of the kind of angry accusation which Constantius had hurled against the Roman legates at the Synod, and enables us to see how keenly the Emperor felt the strong, quiet air of authority which such officials as Liberius used as of right. The tone of this letter for all its reasonableness is the manly utterance of one ruler to another, and breathes the self-sure tone of one whose office derived its power from no earthly source.

For the rest Liberius laid stress upon the fact that, eight years before, certain clerics (the envoys with the Macrosthich) would not renounce Arianism. The Western bishops, therefore, could not hold discussion with such men. They received too, in their communion, men who had separated themselves from the Church, notably, for example, George in Alexandria. ⁽¹⁾ Liberius would finally entreat Constantius, so victorious and so courageous in his recent war, that now he would confirm the faith of Nicaea and endear his memory to all generations.

Despite the wise deprecations of Liberius with regard to holding another Synod, the Emperor elected to convene one. Milan was the place chosen. He, himself, was excluded at first from its proceedings as it met in a Church, into which he, as not baptized, could not enter. Its proceedings were so disorderly that afterwards it

(1) George of Laodicea has been suggested as a correction of the text. The Cappadocian George was certainly at Cappadocia ^{sometime} in 345-351 A.D. when Julian met him (Letter of Julian To Eudocius 23. (Hertlein 9.)) and came from Cappadocia to Alexandria when elected Bp. If he was at any other time in the latter city we do not know but it would explain perhaps his appointment.

was transferred to his palace. There seemed to be a general disposition at this time, which showed itself at this Council, to offer to agree to condemn Athanasius, if first the Nicene formula was accepted. It was not a position from which Athanasius himself would have shrunk. Eusebius of Vercellae came with a copy of the Nicene faith and said that when all had signed it, he would agree to depose the Alexandrian bishop. Dionysius of Milan took pen in hand to do so, but Valens snatched it from his hand. It was at this stage of general uproar that adjournment was made to the Emperor's presence. He had found a way of securing an agreement on creed prior to the trial of the accused bishop, which was by the publication of a formula in his own name. He had hinted before at Arles as we see from the letter of Liberius that he was wearied of wordy theological debate;^{and} this may have been his way of ending (1) it. It ^{was} ~~is~~ generally thought, however, that the device was one (4) of Valens in order that the creed, so issued, might harm no one's reputation if it proved heterodox, since it was merely the utterance of a catechumen. The creed being thus declared, the bishops were told that they were to condemn Athanasius and enter into communion (2) with their Eastern brethren at once. They demurred at this novel procedure as contrary to every Ecclesiastical Canon. He immediately replied, "Whatever I will, be that esteemed a canon. The bishops of Syria let me speak thus. Obey or go into banishment." The fiery spirit of Lucifer of Sardinia could not be contained. Eusebius of Vercellae and Dionysius of Milan supported him. If they had been willing to condemn Athanasius earlier for the sake of the faith, nothing could move them now. They urged that the accusations of Ursacius and Valens against Athanasius were unworthy of notice, as these clerics had changed sides too often. The Emperor said, however, "I am the accuser. On my account you must believe what they assert."⁽³⁾ Lucifer boldly pointed out that so far as the

(1) Cf. Sulpic. Severus. c. 39. (2) Athan. Hist. Arian § 33. (3) loc. cit. § 46.

(4) Valens was a favourite of the Emperor's, the reason being alleged that he was the first to report the victory of the loyal troops over Magnentius.

case concerned Rome, it was the Emperor's affair, but the accused was a bishop, and must be tried by bishops.⁽¹⁾ Moreover the Emperor lived far away from Alexandria and knew these things only on hearsay. Let him hear the accused party speak also.

These Western legalities did not suit the Eastern despot. He deemed himself insulted and decreed the banishment of these men who dared withstand him. The bishops then lifting up their hands to avert God's anger told him that the kingdom was not his but God's and that he should beware lest God took it from him.⁽²⁾ They threatened him with the day of judgment, and warned him against infringing ecclesiastical order and confusing Roman sovereignty with the constitution of the Church. He drew his sword against them we are told,⁽³⁾ but whether the words are literal or figurative we cannot tell. He had a deacon scourged in their presence to intimidate them, but in vain, as far as these three were concerned, for shaking the dust from their feet they went out, unafraid, to their place of banishment. At the same time were deposed, and ordered into exile, Paulinus of Treves, and Athanasius of Alexandria. Thus a decided blow had been struck among metropolitan bishops of the Church by the Emperor greedy for his own unquestioned rule.⁽⁴⁾

Among those who had submitted feebly to the Emperor's overruling had been the papal legates at this Council. It was a mark of the high importance of the Roman bishop that he did not attend Synods. The Emperor might think it befitting his dignity to be there, but the Ecclesiastic^{-al} Emperor did not take a seat in an ecclesiastical senatus. This rule had grown up under Julius, as we may see from the fact that the Synod of Sardica addressed him upon its wisdom, showing that it was not then an accepted and invariable fact beyond comment. He almost certainly had presided at the Roman Synod immediately previous to Sardica which absolved Athanasius. By this time it had become, however, a tradition, and its wisdom might

(1) Referring we suppose to "use and wont." See previous chapter.

(2) Hist. Asian. § 34. (3) loc. cit. (4) Theodoret (II. 15.) emphasises with correct insight the attack upon metropolitans.

be seen, since Liberius, who might have been overborne in the presence of the Emperor, could now repudiate the action of his legates. He wrote to Hosius of Cordova and Caecilianus of Umbria making it plain that he deplored ⁽¹⁾ ~~their~~ ^{his deputies' weak} action. Also he hastened to send congratulatory letters to the exiles expressing his conviction that he would soon follow them into banishment.

Whether the Emperor hoped to find for Rome a more docile priest, or to transfer, as he had done to Milan, an Oriental bishop who could speak no Latin, or to subdue Liberius himself into obedience, he certainly did level his next attack against him. He employed to corrupt the Roman the vicious Eunuch Eusebius who accordingly called upon Liberius with letters, the threats of which might cause fear, and gifts, the value of which might tempt cupidity. ⁽²⁾ This messenger intimated that his Emperor's desire was that Athanasius should be condemned and his command that the Eastern bishops should be received again into communion. ⁽³⁾ He received an answer ⁽⁴⁾ consonant not only with proper feeling, but with papal dignity. Liberius professed the difficulty of condemning a man acquitted by several Councils. He might of course have considered the fact that he had been also condemned by certain Councils, but on the manner in which the proposal was made to him, his retort was valid: "No ecclesiastical canon can authorise such a proceeding, nor have we had transmitted to us any such tradition from the Fathers, which they might have received from the great and blessed Apostle Peter. But if the Emperor is really concerned for the peace of the Church, if he requires our decrees respecting Athanasius to be reversed, let their proceedings both against him and against all others be reversed also, and let an Ecclesiastical Council be called at a distance from the Court, at which the Emperor shall not be present, nor any Count admitted, nor any magistrate to threaten us, but where only the fear of God and the Apostolic rule shall prevail; that so in the first

(1) better in Hilary Fragmenta VI. (2) Athan. Arian Hist. § 35-6. (3) Athan. says "Arian bishops" but that is his nomenclature. Liberius in his letter spoke of "Oriental bishops" - Significant *Orientalis paci nostrae velle conjugii.* Constantius did not take this trouble for a theological doctrine but for the sake of a Church reunited in a world-wide peace. (4) Reply in Ath. loc. cit. § 36. (Hilary. Frag. VI. 4)

Fathers

place the faith of the Church may be secured as the ~~Principles~~ defined it in the Council of Nicaea, and the supporters of Arian doctrines cast out, etc. All diversity of opinion in point of faith ought first to be eradicated and then enquiry made into matters of conduct. These things report to the Emperor, for they are both profitable for him and edifying for the Church."

Eusebius was much enraged at these words, being according to Athanasius, himself an Arian, although his general character would lead one to think that he could not hold a theological opinion of any sort with much enthusiasm. He threatened Liberius very frankly, but tried to fulfil his double mission by leaving his gifts, which the bishop had refused, upon the high altar of St. Peter. In ignorance or audacity he became guilty thereby of very serious sacrilege, and Liberius had his presents flung out.

The Bishop of Rome now found himself in the extraordinary position of being excommunicated by order of a catechumen. This sentence took the form of a civil boycott strictly enforced by Imperial officials. The port of Ostia and the gates of Rome were guarded lest anyone should have access to him. Bribes and threats were liberally employed to secure that his fellow bishops should withdraw from his society. The Prefect of Rome was then, at last, ordered to deliver up his person at the Court of the Emperor, which was done. A summary of the dialogue which then ensued is given by Theodoret.⁽¹⁾ Despite the difficulty of seeing how such a record could be preserved, it rings true in ~~every~~ detail. Liberius stood firmly by the cause of Athanasius, for it was on his account that the Emperor had summoned him for admonition. He pleaded that the case of the Alexandrian bishop had never been examined in presence of the accused.

"The whole world", said the Emperor, "has condemned him, and he, as he has done from the beginning, does but trifle away time."

(1) Theodoret II. 16.

Eusebius, the Eunuch, attempted to make the case stronger by saying that Athanasius had been condemned at Nicaea, for which statement he must be deemed to have exculpated himself from all serious charge of knowing anything about the dispute on its theological side. Epictetus gave it at this point as his opinion that Liberius did not plead from any love of Athanasius, but in order to boast before the Roman Senators that he had turned the Emperor from his purpose. He probably knew exactly what to say to feed the royal anger. Roman democracy, Roman pride, and Roman privilege were all incarnate in Liberius at that moment to this Oriental despot among his crowd of Eunuchs and Sycophants.

"What portion are you of the Universe," he cried out, "that you desire to defy the peace of the Empire to defend one sole wicked individual?"

Liberius stated that he stood for truth, for which once three had dared to stand alone. Eusebius, unexpectedly, knew that the reference was to the Book of Daniel. He cried out that this saying compared the emperor to Nebuchadnezzar. The Bishop then asked for a return to the faith of Nicaea, for a restoration of all the banished to their Sees, and for an examination at Alexandria of the charges against the bishop of that place. Epictetus said that this was impossible as the public vehicles were insufficient. (1) Liberius promised that the Church would bear the charge herself. Constantius pointed out, revealing the old sore, that Athanasius had nearly caused a war between himself and his brother. Liberius advised him not to use the Church as a means for private revenge. Upon that Constantius had but one question to put. It was - "Would he enter into communion with the Eastern bishops or go into banishment?"

"The decrees of the Church", said the bishop, "are of more importance than a residence at Rome".

Thus he went into exile. Constantius ordered his place of

(1) The complaint was indeed common among the heathen that the public transport was used up by bishops posting to and fro to Synods. See Ammianus Marcellinus and Athanasius (De Synodis Seleuci Armeni).

residence to be Berea in Thrace, and offered him a large bribe upon his departure to it. This man was not of the temperament of the ex-Emperor Vetricio to be so contented. He refused this gift and also offerings made by the Empress. The greatest insult was, however, a present proffered by the Eunuch.

"Do you", said Liberius, "you, who have made the Churches of the world a desert, bring me alms as if I were a criminal. Go and first become a Christian."

(1)

Athanasius meanwhile did not know of these events. Greatly exercised by the position into which he had been put by the unasked invitation of the Emperor, he remained debating whether to go to Court or not, well aware that to stay or to go might equally be made grounds of offence against him. He was the more inclined to stay, as, if he should be cut off, there was no one to take his place in Alexandria. Twenty six months after he had replied to the Emperor's letter of recall, there came Court messengers but with no reply for him. He became alarmed, however, at the presence of one Syrianus, a General in rank, whose presence caused the discontented elements in his diocese to circulate rumours that things would shortly be seen to go in their favour. This Syrianus gave him then verbal commands directing him to withdraw from the city. Athanasius in reply to this showed the letter, which he had secured from the Emperor on the death of Constans, and which confirmed him in his position and promised him all safety. (2) Syrianus accepted the letter, and, approached by the Alexandrian clerics and people, swore by the Emperor's life that all disturbance, such as now was threatening would be suppressed. He promised to refer again to headquarters for instructions.

Twenty three days later Syrianus burst in upon the Church of Alexandria, while the congregation were at service, and Athanasius upon his episcopal chair. The soldiers and mob with him committed

(1) Athan. Aric. Hist. #39. (2) ~~Apol. ad Const. #6~~. Letter to Apol. ad Constantin. #24.

horrible outrages. The bishop was dragged out in a half-conscious state, ^{having been} struck by some missile, "God hiding me and guiding me," he writes. The virgins were attacked, kicked, and buffeted, and many persons killed. Thereafter George of Cappadocia was intruded into the bishopric. He was a man of a "hangman's temper" according to Athanasius and made good his position by wholesale imprisonment and confiscation of property. (1) Syrianus had either had letters from the Emperor all along, or had just received them, for now edicts were published declaring all Church property should henceforth belong to the anti-Homocousian party and that Athanasius had only been tolerated by Constantius hitherto for his brother's sake. This order obliged all to subscribe to the condemnation of Athanasius on pain of loss of the corn supplies, which last order, including heathen as well as Christians, showed that the Bishop represented something of a national hero to some to the elements of the mixed population of Alexandria.

A meeting for protest or for prayer assembled in the Great Church, the dedication of which had been matter of offence, and this was attacked by a mob of heathen.

They found the assembly dispersed save for a few women, mostly virgins of the Church, whom they used in a shameful fashion. They then proceeded to wreck the Church and pillage it. Through the midst of this band of rioters, however, was unexpectedly carried forth the dying form of one reveller who had pulled the episcopal chair over upon himself, and inflicted a fatal and ghastly wound. The more superstitious then ceased from their sacrilegious sport.

The process of searching the homes of the faithful for the orthodox bishop gave, however, ample opportunity for the baser elements of city to exercise their taste for pillage. Indeed a bitter attack upon the decenter-living citizens seems to have made by the "rascall multitude", as John Knox would have called them.

(1) Apol. de Fuga #6.

We may surmise that the Bishop's strict moral rule had prepared the way for this reaction, since these ~~especially~~ vowed to holiness of life, the monks and virgins, were the special subject of lewd and brutal assaults. Even the poor assembled for the alms of the charitable, after the custom of the late bishop's pious regime, were beaten and driven away. The homes of respectable citizens were broken into on pretence of searching for ^{Athanasius} ~~the Bishop~~, and many goods stolen and defenceless people ill-used. All which would seem to have been the retaliation of human passion upon the ending of a puritan regime, the earnestness of Athanasius having probably imposed a higher degree of morality upon the city than was to the liking of many.

Thus came George of Cappadocia to Alexandria, as its bishop, although Athanasius refuses him always the title of his position. He calls him the "Emperor's spy". His savage temper is proved by such deeds as signalised his entry and which he made no effort to restrain, as well as by his fierce government of his diocese which was the cause of his tragic end. Nevertheless he must have appealed to some as a good if not a heroic figure. All our writers
(1)
are of opposite opinions to him, and so we depend for another estimate of him upon the vague ideas suggested by the ancient fable. In it he, the Christian soldier, strove with the wizard (or dragon in another version) the ally of Magnentius, to protect the Empress Alexandra from its wiles. We can make little of the tale except to see that it was formed somewhere where morality was felt to be on the side of the Cappodocian, and Athanasius seemed like a
(2)
wicked magician injurious to the city. The anti-Homocousian Christians of the city had, as we have seen, their own moral enthusiasms. As elsewhere in the world there was probably a wickedness existent, which could use their protest against Athanasius, as a means of persecuting righteousness itself. The Manichees are

(1) Gregory Nazianzenus calls him "unlearned" but Julian, a shrewd judge, thought his library a thing unique of its kind. (2) For the Fable see the Acta Sacrorum April 23rd

sometimes credited with the worst of these outrages, but it is a fact that, in times of keen feeling, ordinary hooliganism, as we now call it, rears its head, and perpetrates deeds to which the high-minded disputants would not stoop, but of which they must often carry the blame. Indeed, however, George for all his ^{later} martyrdom cannot be exculpated from at least encouraging by his violence such scenes. Above all the Emperor, by the manner of that bishop's intrusion, at once crafty as it was and cruel, must be held in no light measure responsible for the savage usage to which some of the best citizens of one of his fairest cities were then most needlessly subjected.

Such then was the high-handed attitude which Constantius was adopting towards the Church, and such were some of its results. It could not be without effect in arousing among her clergy a sense of injustice and tyranny. Roman Imperial Law was not based on such principles as we commonly in these days associate with Absolutism. (1) There was no elaborate system of police-force, no censorship of speech or writing, and no strong military repression. The organisation for the security of public order was of the simplest description. In theory the Emperor was Commander of the Army and Pro-Consul of the provinces; his sphere was the frontiers of the Republic, which, within, was supposed to be self-governing. His title to authority in home affairs was based on offices, the consular, tribunitian, pontifical and censorial, which rested on the really firmer ground of prestige and moral control rather than on any title of monarchy, a thing odious to the people. (2) When Constantine called himself affably a bishop "of things outside" the Church, his form of words would be understood in a sense which appealed to independent ideals, and, as we have seen, his effort to secure power in the

(1) See Döllinger *First Age of Christianity* tr. Oxenham p. 395.

(2) See Gibbon. *Decline & Fall*. chap II.

Church was of the nature of an insinuation of himself in authority, on the model of Augustus into the civil empire, rather than of an explicit claim to domination on any formal grounds. Moreover Christianity itself had given an immense impulse to the conception of liberty. The command remained to submit to every ordinance, but the very precept, which bade the Christian render to Caesar his due, suggested that the due of God might conflict with the Imperial claim. There had been days when the Roman Empire had been viewed as 'Babylon' doomed to destruction, and its ruler as the Anti-Christ spoken of in Scripture. The period in which thoughts of the State had been of this antagonistic description, or at best of a sad and submissive sort, had left, we must believe, an ineradicable effect upon the mind of the Church. The Confessors had appealed to Emperors for mercy upon their community, or they had, in secret conclave, prayed for the hour when that form of government might pass away, and Christ take to himself his own power and reign. At one period the rule of a Christian Emperor might have seemed the granting of such a prayer. Eusebius indeed had spoken of incidents of Constantine's reign as the very fulfilment of old prophecies; but division in the Church, and the way in which the Imperial governors had taken part in these divisions, could not make that feeling unanimous in the minds of the Christians. The Donatists had already asked, "What has the Church to do with the Emperor". Now however when the holder of the throne said, "My will - that is the Canon," it was inevitable that Catholic Christianity ^{itself and no longer} ~~was~~ mere sections of the faith, should begin to define for itself ^{the} ~~its~~ principles ^{of} ~~as to~~ the limitation of the Civil Magistrate's authority in the Church.

(1)

A Synod had already requested that the Emperor would enforce the principle that magistrates should not interfere in ecclesiastical disputes and, on plea of making provision for the Churches, stir up dissensions. The finding of an Alexandrian Synod had been bolder ⁽²⁾

(1) Sardica, as see A. pol. c. Arian. # 39. (2) Referring to Tyre loc cit # 8.

still which had pronounced that to be "no Council at which a single Count presided, which an executioner attended and where a chief Jailor instead of the Deacons of the Church introduced us into Court; where the Count only spoke and all present held their peace or rather obeyed his directions." "In short", they had asked, "what kind of Council was that, the object of which was banishment and murder at the pleasure of the Emperor?" Tyre ^{was} ~~in~~ the Council referred to, which shows that even in Constantine's day action of this sort could call forth a resentment afterwards to be recorded. These same writers had severely criticised the civil powers with which Gregory was supported in his intrusion into the See of Alexandria, *while their opponents had been offended at Athanasius' return by imperial orders.* We have noted the manner in which a Julius and a Liberius in turn had insisted upon the sanctity of the ecclesiastical law and canon, and the manner in which Lucifer and others ^{had} charged the Emperor, by the fealty he owed to God Who had given him the kingdom, to be careful of his words. "The Empire is not yours but God's who gave it to you," was an axiomatic principle for the Churchmen, and the development of that idea might define and limit the Emperor's powers in a manner not previously contemplated. It was not likely that he could remain long without specific enlightenment from the clerics upon this subject.

After ~~the~~ ^a torrent of depositions which had flowed down upon the Church and when the violent scenes with which Alexandria had become familiar were again repeated, there were framed for the perusal of Constantius three appeals which had the weight, either of ecclesiastical dignity or of sheer ability, to commend them to his attention.

(1)
The one which should have commanded his attention most was that of the old bishop, Hosius, the trusted adviser of his father, the natural president of important Councils, the man who had suggested and carried the letter of the Emperor to the factious, when the Arian

(1) For the document see A.H. Hist. Arian. § 44.

debates began. He had not been at Milan but had afterwards received a summons to the Emperor that he might, as all clerics of importance were commanded at that time, condemn Athanasius and communicate again with Valens and the Easterns. (1) He had held, and probably still held, broad principles with regard to the Arian dispute. He was a man of tolerant outlook as a rule, although at Sardica he had taken a more severe attitude than was justified towards the Easterns. He did not see their point of view or why they would not debate the case of Athanasius in private before him at the Emperor's court. When, however, in Spain he received this summons of a threatening sort, he replied in the tone proper to one who had advised this Emperor's father as a father, "Believe me, O Constantius," he said, "who am of an age to be your grandfather." He wrote his view of the Athanasian case and stated his low opinion of the Emperor's ecclesiastical advisers, Valens and Ursacius. They had recanted before and changed sides. They pretended that this was done in fear of force; but if so, he continued, "and they acknowledge that this is an evil thing which you also disapprove of; then do you cease to use force; write no letters, send no Counts, but release those that have been banished, lest while you are complaining of violence, they do but exercise greater violence. When was any such thing done by Constans? When did he appear in presence at an Ecclesiastical trial? When did any Palatine of his compel men to subscribe against anyone?" "Cease these proceedings", he continued, "and remember that you are a mortal man. Be afraid of the day of judgment and keep yourself pure thereunto. Intrude not yourself into Ecclesiastical matters, neither give commands unto us concerning them, but learn them from us. God hath put into your hands the kingdom; and to us he hath entrusted the affairs of His Church; and, as he, who should steal the Empire from you, would resist the ordinance of God, so likewise fear on your part, lest by

(1) Acc. to Athanasius "Arians" but see note *supra*.

taking upon yourself the government of the Church, you become guilty of a great offence. It is written, render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. Neither therefore is it permitted unto us to exercise an earthly rule, nor have you, Sire, authority to burn incense. These things I write unto you out of a concern for your salvation." His last words are concerned with his repudiation of the Arian heresy and with his diagnosis of the situation that the Emperor was allowing himself to be made a tool of by certain prelates, actuated by a personal spite against Athanasius.

This statement of the Church's liberty is brief, but in few words, it defines its principles in a manner admirable alike for its boldness and its clear vision of the issue. It is impossible to believe that a man even of Constantius' type could not feel the force of it, were it only on low grounds of a half-superstitious sort, *when this aged servant of God,* ~~since one~~ who had been his father's chief adviser in all ecclesiastical affairs, and *almost certainly* ~~perhaps~~ of influence also with his grandfather, now sternly rebuked him.

(1)

The second appeal was of Athanasius himself. It was prepared *as we have said previous to* ~~his~~ his expulsion from Alexandria as an address to the Emperor to whom he intended to make personal appeal. As he emerged from the desert, he found out the devastation that had come upon the bishoprics and knew himself already proscribed. He then changed its form into that of a letter. It is the most careful, in literary form, of all his compositions, but, in view of possible oral delivery, is not so strong a statement as might have been made otherwise. It is mainly concerned with a refutation of the various charges which had been brought against him by his enemies, and with the explanation of his apparent refusal to answer the Emperor's embarrassing form of summons. It is to be noted that he does not deny the right of a righteous Prince to demand an explanation from a bishop of acts which

(1) *The Apology ad Constantium*

might be regarded as *lese majesté*, but is most free in his defence upon these subjects. Such crimes would be far from him, for he has not forgotten the commandment, "Curse not the king, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in the bed chamber." He had been accused of seeking the influence of Constans but he makes it plain that when at Rome he laid his case before the Church only, "for this was my only concern", he adds. As for the idea that he gave countenance to the usurper, Magnentius, he repudiates his very name with loathing, and calls as witnesses all the officials of Egypt, who know how his fervent prayers were offered up for Constantius throughout the time of this rebellion. His appeal to the Emperor for a fair consideration of his case is strong and moving. Had he been accused by any other, he says, it would have been to Constantius that he would have appealed for justice. He breaks forth into prayer:- O Lord Almighty who by Thy word has given the kingdom to Thy servant Constantius, shine into his heart that he may make known unto all men that his ears are set to hearken unto truth, according as it is written, Righteous lips alone are acceptable unto the King that the throne of his Kingdom may be established." He does not question the right of the Emperor to send deputies like Syrianus, but states his suspicion that he had no authority for such underhand dealings. Having then an opening to speak freely upon the outrage and sacrilege committed, he does not spare words. They have been cruelly used whom Constantine delighted to honour. The madness of Pilate has been exceeded, for he had our Lord scourged, but these Virgins are peculiarly the Saviour's own. "What is worse they pretended this was commanded by your Piety." He therefore beseeches the Emperor so to act that in the day of judgment he may say to our Lord, the King of all, (Παμβασιλεῖ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ) "None of thine have I lost but Iwas grieved for those who perished, for the Virgins who were scourged, and for all other

things that were committed against the Christians, and I brought back them that were banished and restored them." It will be seen in all this how with what freedom was possible to him, Athanasius faithfully pointed out the Emperor's duties and his dereliction of them in his recent doings.

(1)

The third appeal marks the arrival of a new protagonist of the Catholic faith upon the scene of conflict. It is the work of Hilary who had but lately been elected to the bishopric of Poitiers in Gaul. He was a man whose conversion from heathendom had come about in the course of his study of Scripture, and he had been hurried through the various stages to the Episcopate on account of his conspicuous ability and his high moral character. He, about this time (355 A.D.), wrote his first book addressed to Constantius Augustus.

It states the confidence of the writer in the acceptance which its appeal will receive from the beneficent emperor, and with tears deprecates the sufferings of the Catholic Churches. "Let thy clemency enact and decree", it implores, (2) "that all judges everywhere, to whom the administrations of the provinces are entrusted, to whom also the oversight and charge of public affairs only belongs, shall abstain from religious oversight, nor henceforth presume and usurp, and take upon themselves to hear, judicially, clerical cases, and so break and persecute innocent men by means of various afflictions, threats and violence." It assumes that the wisdom of the Emperor will know how unseemly it is that clerics ^{Should} ~~shall~~ subject themselves to men of heterodox opinions for is it not the very purpose of his vigilant rule that all men whom he governs may have possession of sweetest liberty. It states that only on the principle of freedom of will allowed to each citizen in living his life, can riots and convulsions in the State be obviated or quelled. ~~Although~~ ^{however} Apparently, the principle of complete freedom is not seen

(1) Hilary *liber Primus ad Constantium Augustum*. *McGue Hilary* vol. II. p. 554.

(2) *loc. cit* § 1.

to include the Arians, there is ^{the} ~~a~~ plea: ~~made, in this writing, for~~
~~liberty of conscience which goes to the very root of the matter:-~~

"It becomes thy Sanctity to see that those who fear the Lord God and the divine judgment are not polluted or contaminated by accursed blasphemies, but have the power to follow those bishops and leaders who keep inviolate the bonds of charity and are eager to have perpetual and true peace. It cannot be, nor will reason allow, that opposites agree, that things dissimilar adhere together, that truth and falsehood mix, that light and darkness flow into one, or that day and night be joined together. If, therefore, as without doubt we hope and believe, these words move your, not merely inbred but inborn, goodness, order it that the local magistrates provide, to those guilty of grave heresies, neither zeal, grace nor favour. May thy mildness permit the people that, whom they would wish, whom they would esteem, whom they would choose they may hear as teachers, and celebrate with them the divine rites of the sacraments and offer prayers for thy safety and happiness."

It is made plain that those on whose behalf favour is sought are peaceable and loyal, but the other parties are accused of fomenting strife and sedition, and a direct entreaty for the return of the exiled bishops is then made, and there follows ^a ~~this~~ striking

^{passage}
~~paragraph~~; where the writer seems to free the idea of liberty from his
 (1) ~~theological prejudices - he is writing on behalf of a~~
~~"Already no one doubts that these holy men have charged~~
~~Gallian Synod and says that it was right, after the Synod had~~
~~themselves in regard to the absolution of Athanasius with an~~
~~obligation of this sort that "After the Synod's decisions which it~~
~~decided, keeping its decision strictly~~
~~was right should be kept~~ within the priestly or ecclesiastical
 conscience from reverence of the priestly judgment, ~~it behooved~~

to have letters written to the King and an embassy furnished, ~~as now~~
~~was the case, but he says:-~~ (2)

~~What~~ What else in these letters but freedom of faith, and the
 contagion of the name Arian, are the subject of their ^(the Synod's) prayers, and
 they entreat that chains, prisons, tribunals, and all that state

of things, deadly as it is, and new also, as a mode of questioning accused persons, should be put to an end. God teaches knowledge of himself rather than exacts it; and winning authority for his precepts through wonder at his heavenly works, despises that the will should be forced to confess Him. If, for the sake of the true faith, force of this sort were applied, the bishops' teaching would proceed vigorously against it and say:- God is the Lord of the Universe, and needs no worship of necessity, requires no compulsory confession. He is not to be deceived but conciliated. For our own sake rather than for His, He is to be worshipped. I cannot receive him except with a willing heart, or hear him except I pray, or publicly profess Him unless I inwardly confess Him. With singleness of mind He must be sought, with confession, is He to be learned, with brotherly love He is to be adored, with fear revered, and with uprightness of will remembered. Indeed then what is this that priests are compelled by imprisonments, are ordered with punishments to fear God!"

~~A Christian writer of the time of Constantine impressed perhaps Hilary speaks with all sincerity from the fulness of his heart by that monarch's successful depression of the Donatists had requested the Emperor to use force against the heathen, but we can see from the tone of this writing that the mind of the Christian Athanasius had come back to his See with all the legions of the West Church was against cruel measures. Especially therefore might an appeal be made for their own freedom in days of attack from others, decision of Eastern priestly judgment. A weapon she had herself taken and we can see that it was made with an eloquence and force such as up had turned against the Church, and begun to be no longer a servant but must have appealed even to an Emperor of Constantius' sort. The~~
 The idea of compelling the West to inter-communion with the Easterns

had apparently moved him not only to the summary steps enumerated but to a species of inquisition in all quarters of his new dominion. The first fruits of it in Gaul were disquieting, and there is a hint in Hilary's appeal that, whereas all had been in a state of content and ^{peace} ~~quiet~~, his Easternising ecclesiastical movements had caused

some of the disorders which were now threatening and which afterwards became serious. *This may have had greater influence still*

upon him. The letter of Athanasius would probably alone have had little persuasive effect. We are in doubt in any case as to the date at which it was presented; but we can with some certainty put

the letter of Hosius and Hilary soon after the Council of Milan in 355 A.D. In which case it is hard not to read into a decree of

September of that year some result of their appeal. At all events there is preserved an edict of that date:—⁽¹⁾ "Constantius Augustus

to Severus, We prohibit by a law of our clemency, that bishops be accused in public law courts, lest while a pleading impunity is held to exist for their benefit, liberal scope is given to furious minds to attack them.⁽²⁾ If there is any thing contentious which anyone

brings forward as an indictment, let it be examined rather before other bishops that appropriate and fitting hearing be given to the suits of all persons."

This was of course only a confirmation of what Constantine had permitted, but it is difficult to believe that the bold plea of a Hosius or a Hilary, as well as the guarded hint of an Athanasius, working upon the conscience and judgment-fears of Constantius, did not produce this law. He had been-reminded that the Byzantine was not the "Pambasileus", that Christ was the Head of the Church, and that God asked no service of Roman lictors for His honour. We must remember too that we know of these appeals, because the men who made them were famous and their writings^{were} prized through the ages, but there must have been many others which have not come down to us. It must have been obvious to him that he had become unpopular. His ears were not so closed to the clamour of public opinion that he could not hear of any judgment upon his actions other than that of his favourite bishops. We know that disturbances were even then beginning in Gaul, to settle which he had to call in the distasteful help of his nephew, Julian. It is most likely that, if he had any

(1) Cod. Theod. XVI Tit. II. 12. (2) i.e. that liberty of pleading at law should not provide license to slander men in their position.

wisdom of state-craft whatever, he would change his policy, and so we may judge that, beginning to understand on what principles his brother had governed his ecclesiastical subjects, he, who could not, like him, hold aloof when he had leisure from any affair in his realm, might at least adopt a different tone and temper in his mode of securing his own will. Too much attention may not be given to the fact that Hilary himself was destined to suffer for the inclusion of the name of the Bishop of Arles in his list of names deserving excommunication. That prelate had the ~~vindicator~~ ^{champion of ecclesiastical} liberty banished at a Synod at Biterrae, the year after his appeal, but the very fact, that the charge brought against him was, he believed, falsified to the Emperor, and that he appealed to him afterwards in a letter ⁽¹⁾ from exile, would make it certain that his boldness in declaring the principles of Church freedom was not the cause of this attack. ⁽²⁾ Even in this connection the fact that the Gallic bishops openly took the side of Hilarius, and yet do not seem to have been treated with the severity used towards Alexandrian and Roman bishops in similar circumstances, would denote that some edict restricting the use of the civil power was now in force, unless, of course, Julian, now Caesar of Gaul acted as a restraint.

(1) *Letter II at Constantium.* (2) *Sulpic. Severus & Vita Sancti Hilarii Maffei.*

CHAPTER XII.

CONSTANTIUS' MODIFICATIONS OF HIS ATTITUDE.

CREED MAKING BY STATE SUPPORTED COMMITTEES.



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CONSTANTIUS' MODIFICATIONS OF HIS ATTITUDE. CREED MAKING BY STATE SUPPORTED COMMITTEES.

In Scottish Ecclesiastical history when the conflict between Episcopalians and Presbyters had reached a height of dangerous severity, a way of peace was sometimes sought by taking repressive measures against the papists. With a similar purpose Constantius (1) may have published those decrees of 356 A.D. which legislated the punishment of death for all who meddled with sacrifices. ~~It was, if so, not accompanied, we know, with any violence against the places of ancient worship, since Constantius, an enraged Church, since we know that,~~ in the following year, ~~viewed without anger the stately but presum-~~ entered Rome in procession and ~~desecrated temples of the gods.~~ ^{desecrated temples of the gods.} These in fact impressed him more deeply than he would allow himself to show, and exceeded in wonder his expectations even as kindled by report. (2) It was in this chastened mood that a notable deputation found him, very unusual in these days, but effective with one who was always credited with great susceptibility to female influence. If his wife, Eusebia, to whom he was ardently and faithfully attached, had succeeded in making him, but lately, look favourably upon Julian, now all the ladies of Rome were at his side to plead for another person, scarcely less dangerous to his autocratic ambitions, namely Liberius, the exiled Bishop of Rome. Their husbands were afraid to present this petition, but it was thought that they might rely upon the immunity due to their sex. Accordingly arrayed in their most splendid attire and with every evidence of their rank upon their persons, they besought his pity on behalf of so great a diocese deprived of its shepherd. (3) He had taken special care by Imperial enactments (4)

(1) Cod. Theod. XVI Tit. X 2.6. (2) Symmach. Bk x Ep. lxvi. Ammon. XVI. X
13, 14, 15.
(3) Sozom. II. 37. Theod. II. 17. (4) Codex Theod. XVI Tit. II. 13 & 14.

to conserve for his own tool, Felix, who held the bishop's office, all civil immunities and privileges, and so, not unnaturally replied that the flock possessed a pastor, capable of tending it, and that no other was needed. Felix was of Nicene belief, although he received the Easterns in communion, but he had not been acknowledged by the people. The reason was, no doubt, that so great an inroad into ecclesiastical privilege, as had been made in the banishment of Liberius, was deeply resented, especially ^{by} ~~in~~ this city of liberty. Felix had but a dozen people in his congregation, and this fact was made plain to Constantius who announced then that Liberius should be recalled, but that two bishops should conjointly rule the flock. This gracious announcement was made on the race-course, and was greeted with uproarious laughter. It seems that the spectators there each wore the colours of their party in the sporting contests, and that the Oriental monarch, in ignorance of the traditions of his own city, had perpetuated an absurd joke by the announcement of a double episcopate in this atmosphere of sporting rivalry. Then after the laughter had died away, arose according to tradition the solemn chant, "One God, One Christ, one bishop". Some lessons as to the temperament of his Western people were being learned by the Byzantine during his all too brief stay in the Western capital. He could not go forth again from the atmosphere of this home of ancient freedom, where privileges of immemorial antiquity were prized, and where a bishopric, claiming descent from the Apostles, was enshrined among the most sacred for its Christian citizens, without understanding that the Empire was too vast to be swayed by mere despotism, and its spirit too educated to truckle at the feet of pure force.

He now withdrew from Rome to Sirmium as to a convenient mid-point of his dominions, and began, it may be noted, a search also for a mid-point of view, theologically, between the Eastern and

Western theologians. The plan of issuing a Creed in his own name at Milan, and of demanding universal subscription to it, had not been successful. We have reason to think that now there occurred to him another idea, for the success of which he had high hopes. The stern reprimands of Hosius had been read by him, and ^{apparently} he determined to follow them. That bishop had said, "Intrude not yourself in ecclesiastical matters but learn them from us." It might appear to him a promising policy, to gather into his Court a small committee of influential clerics of East and West, who might frame a statement of doctrine of such a kind as would restore peace to the divided Church. At all events, a statement of doctrine was issued soon thereafter from the Court of Sirmium which bore the names of Ursacius, Valens and Germinius, coupled with those of Hosius and Potamius of Lisbon. Athanasius adds to these names the words "and others", but both Hilary and Sozomen ^{provide stronger authority for believing there} ~~are authority for there being~~ were only five. It is extremely improbable that the Emperor himself was present at their debates.

Athanasius attributes the subscription of Hosius to this statement of the faith to violence, saying that he was tortured, until at last he yielded and subscribed it. Socrates and Sozomen follow Athanasius and express what might be the not unnatural supposition of the Church, on finding the name of the venerable father, the president of Nicaea, attached to a creed which received the current name, among the orthodox, of the "Blasphemy". We can see, however, that such statements are based upon conjecture, whereas the statement of Hilary proceeds from no bias, but states what to him must have been a painful fact. Furthermore, by no error could the name of Hosius be so attached to the creed, since the copyist or annotator would rather be tempted to omit it than to insert it. The statement of Hilary is expressly moreover that Hosius and Potamius were the authors of the document, while the others merely

(1) Athan. de Synodis Scilicet. & Armen. § 24. Hilary de Synodis XL Sozomen IV. 12.

concurred.

The idea that Hosius then about 100 years of age could be scourged to compliance even by a tyrant, above all by Constantius, whom even hostile writers credit with a certain humanity, seems less credible than that he should take part in framing this formula; and the bishop who had endured the persecutions of ~~this Emperor's~~ ^{heathen Emperors} ~~grandfather~~ was not likely to yield to mere threats of exile or even of death. He had made it plain, but a few years before, that such things held no terror for him, and torture we are convinced, is unthinkable in a case where even a Nero would have held his hand. When we find Hosius in community of discussion with Valens and Ursacius, we would rather guess at influence being brought to bear upon him of another sort. Constantius could on occasion be winning in manner. With what grace had he but lately presented Julian to his troops, and so he may now have appealed to Hosius by his father's memory for the help of his prestige and wisdom to frame a reconciling formula such as would unite the Church again in East and West. Hosius in such a case, as did Athanasius at a later date, may have believed it was wise not to let rankle in the mind the errors of the past, and that no word, not even "Homoousios" was of sacred worth in the cause of truth. As we have said the great aim in the West was to avoid any hint of Polytheism, and so what was called the Blasphemy may have emerged from sincere motives. The main feature of this Creed was the attempt to define Trinitarian doctrine in purely scriptural terms. (2)

In it occurred the clause:- "Since very many have been troubled about that which is termed "substantia" in Latin and οὐσία in Greek, that is to say, in order to mark the sense more accurately, ὁμοούσιος or ὁμοιούσιος it is altogether desirable that none of these terms should be mentioned; nor should they be mentioned or

(1) Ammian. Marcell. XVI. VIII. (2) For this Statement of the Faith see Hilary de Synodis XI.

preached on (in the Church. ~~(Athanasius)~~) for the reason that nothing is recorded of them in the Holy Scriptures and because these things are above the knowledge of mankind." It will be noted therefore that this document contains reminiscences of Constantine's first letter upon this vexed question. Since that strong plea for abstention from these transcendental debates was associated with Hosius, it is not at all impossible that this too was the conscientious effort of that bishop to find out a formula of reconciliation. That there ^{was} ~~so~~ much in it of statements favouring Arian ideas would be due to the tendency, ~~in~~ such a case, to go as far as one ^{could} ~~can~~ go, in meeting opponents, and the assertion of the unity of God, the Scriptural phrases and the repetition of the Baptismal formula would probably give confidence against misconstruction. Hosius was probably in any case too old to be nimble-witted in these debates. As for Potamius he perhaps was chosen as one not over mentally alert in these matters for all his distinguished position in the Church. Even Valens and Ursacius may not have been desirous of producing an Arian formula. They had few convictions and their immediate object was a statement of faith which would get rid of present dissensions. If this was so, then it would appear that that five men sitting down with the object not of defining truth as they saw it but of reconciling differences, succeeded in framing this statement which was at once to be denounced in East and West. By methods of careful and sincere thought at Sirmium in 351 A.D. a faith had been stated which needed but a touch to make it acceptable to all. Trying the other method, the politic non-committal method, at the request of the ^{politically minded} ~~Emperor~~ Emperor, five clerics out of touch with the theological movements of the time, some because of age and some because of dishonesty of mind, had reached a creed which was indeed an instrument in the cause of harmony through its sheer inacceptability. It had perhaps

the doubtful success that it extracted from Liberius in exile the
 (1)
 words, "Bishop Demophilus has explained to me this your
 Catholic faith, which has been examined and accepted at Sirmium
 by several brothers and fellow bishops, and I have willingly and
 without opposition agreed to it. I pray you so work together that
 I may be released from exile and restored to the See entrusted to
 me by God."

The strong-hearted declaration of the Church's liberty which
 the Bishop of Rome had lately made, renders it difficult for us
 to accept ^{some of} ~~all~~ the fragments of his letters which Hilary preserves,
~~as genuine~~, yet no plea for their inauthenticity can be really
 more than special pleading for the sake of a Pope or of a man once
 so brave, and ^{so} confident of his own power to endure privation. His
 last letter, in reference to his misery, is indeed pitiable and
 broken. The facts are that he did find acceptable some formula
 renouncing the word "*ὁμοούσιος*". As he was recalled to take
 part in the Sirmian Synod of 358, it must have been this formula
 to which he referred in this letter, or that of 351, and we would
 not expect that Hilary would obsecrate him so heartily for sub-
 scription to the earlier creed of Sirmium which had his own favour.
 Thus the Emperor might be delighted in supposing that a formula had
 been now found, framed by Hosius and supported by the Bishop of
 Rome. With pleasant anticipations he now summoned his Eastern
 bishops from a great dedication at Ancyra to a conference at
 Sirmium in the hope that at last an effective union would be cemented.

His wisdom had failed to note that Hosius was out of touch with
 the modern aspect of this problem, that Liberius once so bold was
 ready from weakness to assent almost to anything, that the Western
 Church was set against this formula as the worst of all such state-
 ments, and that already even the Easterns were alarmed. A party

(1) better in Hilary. Fragment. VI. 6. (2) So Eudoxius said at Antioch
 acc. to Sozomen IV. 15, & Hilary had no bias against Liberius to represent
 him in a bad light.

of these indeed at Antioch headed by Eudoxius who, without authority of any sort, was inaugurating himself into that bishopric, hailed this Sirmium formula, especially since the name of Liberius was attached to it, as a triumph for its authors who had brought the West to the Eastern faith.⁽¹⁾ Not less earnestly than the Gallican bishops, however, one of whom, Phoebadius, wrote a vigorous refutation of its tenets, most Eastern bishops were denouncing its falsity. The trouble was that there had been a revival of a "left" wing of Arianism by one Aetius, under the name of "Anomoeanism", the adherents of which said that the Son was unlike the Father. Just as the errors of Photinus and Marcellus had caused the Westerns to be more conciliatory on an occasion, so now even George of Laodicea was eager to combat this danger. The principle, "The Son is like to the Father in all things", had become a Shibboleth of the Easterns who used too sometimes the phrase, "The Son is of like substance with the Father." It seemed a convenient halting place for those whose thinking inclined to orthodoxy but who, from genuine fear of the word, or from the stubbornness of controversy, would not accept *ὁμοούσιος* as a definition of the faith.⁽²⁾ These now appealed to the Emperor from Ancyra, where they were holding a great Synod, calling for a stricter declaration of the Son's likeness to the Father. They gave as reason the new objection to the true Sonship of the Lord which had been lately devised, and by a long list of anathemas they sought to steer a middle way between the old and the new dangers.

The errors of Aetius, supported as they were by so influential a cleric as Eudoxius, caused thus the gravest anxiety to the Eastern Church, and soon an important deputation, composed of Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius of Sebaste, and Eleusius of Cyzica, attended upon the Emperor at his palace to represent to him the seriousness of the

(1) Sozom. loc. cit. supra.

situation and urge that so valuable a definition of Christ's likeness to God as the words, *ὁμοιος κατὰ πάντα ἢ ὁμοιούσιος*, should be confirmed in official creeds. They arrived not a moment too soon for the Anomoean party's deputies were just on the point of departure with favourable letters. Constantius soon changed his opinions, and the deputies had the satisfaction of leaving the royal presence with rescripts, which not only condemned Aetius, but also Eudoxius for his action in intruding himself into the bishopric of Antioch. He exhorted, in these letters to the people of Antioch, a careful avoidance of these new errors "Recall to your recollection", he wrote, "the words of which we have made use when we first made a declaration of our belief, for we confessed that our Saviour is the Son of God, and of like substance with the Father." The Creed of Antioch (Dedication) had no equivalent phrase to "of like substance", using the words instead, "unvarying image of the Godhead"⁽²⁾ Thus Constantius at the bidding of these deputies must be referring to Nicaea although he is misquoting by an *iota* the formula of that Council. His language is forcible, however, against the new heresy which he describes as "not far removed from Atheism". It is interesting to see how quickly he who had endorsed the formula evolved by his committee of Five, which at its best we must call non-committal,⁽³⁾ and, then had accepted the statements of Anomoeans, now within the space of hours turned round to plead for ancient faith and for the very word which had been declared unscriptural and not to be used. It is impossible, therefore, to believe that he had really any personal opinions upon the matter.

It was evident now that the creed of the Five would not do. The new Macrostich, lately evolved at Ancyra, would not appeal to him, but if he could combine these two definitions in some formula he might have a solution of his difficulty. Opportunity was put in

(1) *Sogom. IV. 14.* (2) For Creeds of Antioch (Dedication) see *A/8un. De Synodis* p. 23. (3) Acacian we may now call the broad party after Acacius of Caesarea

his way of getting a name, more significant than even that of Hosius, for such a document. Liberius had grown more insistent in his appeals to be returned to his Church. If he had been prepared to accept the creed of Hosius, the more elaborate declarations of Ancyra would further convince him that the faith of the East was not utterly divorced from truth. Apparently also the miseries of exile were keenly felt by this bishop, for his letter asking the help of Vincentius to regain his See is piteous in its appeal.⁽¹⁾ Through the influence of those who saw his change of mind he was summoned to the Emperor, and so was present at Sirmium in 358 A.D. at the Council which replaced the meaningless creed of Hosius by a more substantial document, guarded against Anomoean error.

(2)

Sozomen thus describes what occurred:- "They had formed a compilation in one document of the decrees enacted at the Council of Sirmium against Paul of Samosata and Photinus; to which they subjoined a formula of faith drawn up at Antioch at the consecration of the Church, as if certain persons had under the pretext of the term, Homoousian, attempted to establish a heresy of their own.

(3)

Liberius, Athanasius, Alexander, Severianus and Crescens, bishops of Africa were induced to assent to this document, as were likewise Ursacius, Germinius of Sirmium, Valens of Myrsa, and all the other Eastern bishops then present. They likewise approved of a confession of faith drawn up by Liberius in which he declared that those who affirm that the Son is not like unto the Father in substance and in all other respects are excommunicated After these enactments the Emperor permitted Liberius to return to Rome."

The Eastern bishops mentioned included Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius, Mark of Arethusa, and the prominent leaders of the recent Ancyra decisions, and thus we may see in these transactions

(1) For Letter See *McLaurin Fragments* II. (2) *Sozomen*. IX. 15. (3) Not of course of Alexandria.

important happenings in the way of reaching real agreement. No formula of Antioch (Dedication) speaks however as if "certain persons had under the pretext of the term, *ὁμοούσιος*, attempted to establish a heresy." We may gather, however, from references (1) (2) in Athanasius and Hilary, that the Basilian bishops referred, probably, to a condemnation of the word at the Council at Antioch concerning Paul of Samosota (269 A.D.), and this is no doubt the point which Sozomen is here confusing. We may understand then that they had revealed to Liberius by the evidence of their long Sirmian formula of 351, coupled with their recent declarations of Ancyra, that nothing but one word stood in the way of complete reconciliation. For their scruples regarding that word they had the good authority of an ancient Council. Gone were the days when the Eusebians with their vague creeds had obscured the issues, for ^{a considerable number} ~~the majority~~ of Easterns, alarmed by new developments, were eager to define the faith in clear terms. We cannot therefore express the utmost abhorrence of Liberius that he consented to the disappearance of the word of difficulty, providing only that a phrase was added plainly declaring the Son's likeness to the Father in substance and all respects. Liberius returned to his bishopric and for some time ruled jointly with Felix, who, however, soon died. Liberius was popular at Rome and highly esteemed. His return was no doubt accepted with gladness by his people, although with the orthodox he had to bear the name of surrendering the faith. Hilary, if all (3) the fragments of his history are genuine, was a savage critic of the Roman bishop. Despite, however, his weakness in exile, he showed himself before the Emperor and when engaged at Sirmium in seeking a true formula ^{also} ~~but one~~ which the East might accept, not destitute of courage but able to take a sane and broad-minded view of the situation.

- (1.) Athan. *De Synod. Arim. et Seleuc.* #43. Hilary *De Synodis* #81.
 (2.) Any term is preferable to Semi-Arian which means nothing either theologically or from point of view of ecclesiastical party. "Eastern Orthodox" would be preferable theologically - But the main point in our study is to distinguish the party keen for correct faith from ^{the} Basilian-Reacian indefinite policy.
 (3.) That is, ^{the} ~~the~~ *paramelice* curses are lies and not some zealous annotator's.

The Emperor, however, by his inability to let well alone and allow the mind of the Church to adapt itself to the situation, succeeded in associating the name of Liberius and of the Eastern bishops with an attempt to force a Creed upon Councils without debate. The formula which they had composed, and their agreed-on explanation of the use of the words, were of a half-private nature and relevant only to the question of the Roman bishop's acceptance of the ~~E~~asterns in inter-communion. Constantius, however, who was taking the step of calling a great world-council, used this definition, or rather modifications of it made next year, as its formal creed. He also used it there in the manner in which he had planned to use first his own creed of Milan, and more recently the Committee-made creed of the Five. He had now more important names as vouchers for his new document, and pursuing his policy of seeking agreement by forcing a Committee-made creed on the clerics he proceeded to press it in a way which even its authors resented.

(1)

The Oecumenical Council which Constantius planned was supposed by the Anomoeans to be designed in their favour, and by the Orthodox to be intended to crush out this heresy. Athanasius argues that it was entirely unnecessary and a cause of scandal to the Church. The time was not apposite. The frequency of Councils and their several definitions of faith, it is true, had made Christianity ludicrous in the eyes of the world, and were odious to the Church herself on account of the reverence for Nicaea in the West, and in the East for older Synods, such as Antioch (Dedication) which had taken place before the days when imperial interference curbed free discussion. The Emperor, however, was set upon immortalising his name in connection with as great a Council as his illustrious father had summoned. It may even have been in his mind that he would be hailed as the ruler who gave the Church its creed of unity, thus

(1) For history of proceedings see *A/lan. de Synodis Seleuc. et Arim. Socrat.* II. 34, *Sozomen* III. 19, IV. 10. *Philostorg.* IV. 10. They are extraordinarily conflicting, and one can claim no more than probability for any attempt at weaving a straight-forward narrative from them. Our account is based on a most careful examination of these sources but we cannot claim more for it than that it might explain the most of their statements.

being greater than Constantine.

Basil of Ancyra was his adviser. It was he who prevented the Emperor from choosing Nicaea as the place of meeting, perceiving what alarmed speculations such an action would evoke. He selected Nicomedia in Bithynia as a suitable locality. Arrangements had been partially completed for the World-Synod there, when the town was destroyed by an earthquake in which the cathedral was laid in ruins and the bishop killed.⁽¹⁾ He was a man of extreme piety and his loss was deeply lamented. Nicaea and Constantinople had suffered not a little by the same disaster, and that part of the empire was plunged in general mourning. There were not lacking those who attributed the occurrence to the anger of heaven either against the Christians, or the Arians, or the Orthodox. The bishops on their journey towards Nicomedia halted when they heard of this fatality, and the Emperor wrote to Basil asking what should now be done. Superstitious, himself, he was half inclined to give up the project. Basil, however, anxious to suppress the Anomoeans, suggested another locality. Had he foreknown the ^{personal effects upon himself} results of this convention, he might not have had the same eagerness to further it. There was no other central place, however, not involved in the catastrophe, and it was the Emperor's own idea, suggested perhaps by the wily Eunuch Eusebius that the Synod should meet in two divisions, one at Rimini and one at Seleucia, as also was the plan that ten delegates from each meeting should convene with him at his Court and report the results of their deliberations. Eudoxius was a personal favourite of the Eunuch's, and he may have seen in this device a way of saving him from Basil and the strong Anti-Anomoeans.

The division of the Synod gave the decisive master-hand to the Emperor, and he exhibited his full intention of taking advantage of the situation. His letter ⁽²⁾ to the bishops who assembled at Rimini was a characteristic piece of Cesaro-papism, as some extracts may

- ^{The emotion of}
 (1) ~~A letter of~~ ^{idea} Julian gives us a vivid picture of the way in which this great city was reduced by the disaster to poverty and wretchedness. (See *Ammon. Marcell.* ^{xxii. ix. 35.})
- (2) Hilary Fragment a VI gives his letter.

show:- "Your Sincerity shall recognise that you ought to treat concerning the faith and unity, and give diligence that fitting order may be furnished in ecclesiastical affairs. For thus the prosperity of all people everywhere will be widespread, and faithful concord will be preserved, since, while such disputes are not ended, concord is disturbed to its depths by causes which must be removed. This matter ought not, however, to hold, for undue length, the attention of your mind, for reason does not allow that anything concerning the Eastern bishops should be settled in your Council. Thus you ought to treat at once only of such things as you know to pertain to yourselves, and all being quickly finished, you ought to send ten, chosen by common agreement, to our Court, as we have already intimated in our letters to your Prudence. The aforesaid shall be chosen with powers to respond to all that the Easterns may propose to them, and with powers to treat of the faith, so that every question may be furnished with an appropriate conclusion, and doubt be laid to rest. Since things are so, you ought not to decide anything against the Eastern bishops, or if you shall have decided anything, while the aforesaid are absent, then what was out - with your authority shall fall to the ground as of null effect. For that decision shall not have power and effect to which our statutes declare that authority and scope are forbidden."

The tone of such a letter shows advances upon the model of Constantine's letters of a similar sort. Never before had clerics had laid down to them the scope and limit of their deliberations in this manner, and moreover the method of summoning the Council was a complete innovation upon all ecclesiastical procedure. Other surprises, however, were in store for them.

When the Western bishops were assembled at Rimini, the agreement was read which Liberius and the Easterns had reached, or rather a creed formulated from it in the following year. Even such a creed

may have been tampered with at the last moment by certain of the State party still anxious for a wider and vaguer terminology. Its authors, at all events, seemed surprised at certain important omissions. Eudoxius was an important cleric and of high influence, and would know how to take steps to save himself from the fate Basil and those of his opinion were preparing for him. He had probably sought the ear of Acacius who, always influential with Constantius, was apparently now labouring to defend the Anomoean from his opponents. He or some of his party had thus introduced into the agreement some changes which gave offence. It is doubtful, in any case, if any creed would have been accepted which was presented as this was for acquiescence without discussion.

The term, *σμμοβόριος*, had become as we have seen a Shibboleth and although it may have been known that Liberius had come to acquiesce to some extent in its disappearance, ready consent to such a proposal could not be expected. That being so, could any more ill-advised way of effecting the purposes of peace have been chosen by the Emperor? What agreements might be reached, in the quiet atmosphere of some room in the palace, by the discussion of Liberius and the Eastern bishops, would not be swallowed at once by the Western clerics, especially when presented to them by such unpopular figures as the Emperor's favourite bishops, Valens and Ursacius.

There was further matter to make the Creed unpalatable and that was the Emperor's extraordinary preamble to it:-

"The Catholic faith was published in the presence of our Sovereign, the most religious and gloriously victorious Emperor Constantius, Augustus, the eternal, the majestic, in the Consulate of the most illustrious Flavians, Eusebius and Hypatius, in Sirmium on the 11th of the Kalends of June."⁽¹⁾

"After putting into writing what pleased them they prefix to

(1) For Creed see *A. R. de Synod. Seleuc. et Arimin.* § 8.

it the Consulate, the month and day of the year, thereby to show all thinking men their faith dates not from of old but now from the reign of Constantius. Pretending to write about the Lord they nominate another sovereign for themselves, Constantius - they who deny the Son is everlasting have called him Eternal Emperor."

(1)

Such was the caustic comment of Athanasius, and such feelings must have been excited by many who heard it. It seems certain that the opposition of the Council was ~~largely~~ ^{to a considerable extent} due to these pretentious phrases wherewith Constantius introduced himself and wished to stand as sponsor for the faith of reconciliation. The emphasis placed by those who rejected it upon the ancient character of the faith of the Fathers, reveals the hatred of the Church conscience to newly-made creeds. The whole case against Arius was that he had used his own intellectual powers to define doctrine. It could be no sounder ^{and a Court committee of Churchmen} position that an Emperor should in the year 359 declare the truth. Moreover they were told that there was to be no discussion, as the opinion of each individual could not be scrupulously discovered, but that they were to adopt it as it stood, avoiding mere contention about words. They suggested that a condemnation of Arianism might, at least, be made by all, but this the Presidents disallowed. Accordingly they prepared a long letter of protest to the Emperor in which they entreated him not to dishonour the dead by novelties of faith. "We pray you", they urged, "to preserve the tradition which we received from our ancestors, who were wise and prudent, and led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God. For these innovations not only lead believers to infidelity, but also delude the unbelievers." "God has transmitted the knowledge of the faith to the time in which you live." "We decided that it was requisite to preserve the inviolability of the ancient canons." "There is great danger in adding to or in taking away from these doctrines, for the slightest alteration gives

(1) loc. cit. p. 4. (2) S. J. IV. 17. (3) loc. cit. IV. 18.

opportunity to adversaries to do as they list." Such sentences in their letter show the stand which they took upon the tradition of faith, while in conclusion they pleaded for permission to return to their Sees, urging considerable hardship in their long absences, especially as some were aged and others endured the privation of poverty. "Let the faith remain unchanged", they concluded, "that we may not in future be compelled to leave our Churches and undertake long journeys, but may dwell in peace - and pray for your personal welfare and the peace of your empire."

Ten Deputies were sent with this letter as the Emperor had ordered. There were, however, some eighty bishops who were willing to subscribe the new creed and they also sent ten representatives. They were older men, Sulpicius tells us, than those of the opposing company and so were more successful in presenting their case at Court. The twenty deputies were received at length at Adrianople (1) after needless delays put in their way by the Emperor. They then adjourned to Nice in Thrace to debate the matter, and ill constructions were put upon the choice of ^{a meeting-place,} ~~at once~~, so similar in sound to Nicaea. At last the worn-out deputies agreed. It was made evident that no permission would be given to return to their homes until unanimity was reached. The deputies came back again to Rimini and it was strongly urged that division for the sake of one word was unjustifiable. It was represented that the Eastern brethren were in favour of this Creed and that by acceptance of it unity could be achieved. (2) At last worn out by the debate and wearied of long absence from their Churches, the great majority of the brethren, (3) signed the Creed in the interests of peace. Permission was given, it is said, also to each signatory to make personal additions to their respective copies, and free use was made of this liberty as a way out of conscientious difficulties.

(1) Socras II. 34. (2) Sozom. IV. 19. The statement was not true as seen below. (3) Sulpicius Sever. 43+44+45.

Meanwhile ~~at~~ Seleucia the deliberations had been greatly aided by the presence of Hilary, who being in exile in the East, had been summoned to this Synod, really by a mistake. He made plain the views of the Gallican brethren, and removed to a large extent the prejudices of many of the Easterns concerning the word, *ὁμοούσιος*. In common hatred of Anomoeanism mutual understanding might have been reached, but Seleucia was not designed to be a place for discussion but, like Rimini, for the acceptance of the Imperial Formula. More acute diversion of opinion was the result.

In the first place Constantius had given contradictory orders, as to whether faith or discipline should be treated first. So, at least, it was argued, but his letters were actually explicit on the point that the Creed was first to be considered. Some held, however, that those whose conduct was to be under review were not worthy to discuss the questions of faith. It was strongly urged that deposed bishops had no right to sit in council with the brethren. The Anti-Anomoean party had reason to urge delay, for Basil, and their leaders were not yet present. The order of agenda having at last been settled, however, the Creed of the Emperor was then read to the assembly, and Acacius took upon himself the duty of explaining its provisions which he seems to have done in a strongly Arian sense, at least, to the ears of Hilary. Acacius was one of the old Eusebian type whose views could never be accurately determined, and who now, characteristically, tried to reconcile the Anomoeans and their opponents. The uproar, which quotations from sermons of Eudoxius created, warned him that he would have difficulty in persuading the bishops to the acceptance of the Imperial faith on such recommendations. The dating of the faith and its preamble also caused offence, for it was urged by many that no new faith was needed or would be accepted. It was ~~moved~~ ^{moved} and carried that the

(3.) *Soz. om. IV. 14.* (2) *Socrat. II. 39ff.* (3) *See Hilary Contra Constantium, § 12.* (4) *loc cit. + Socrat II. 40 Soz. IV. 22.*

Creed of Antioch (Dedication) should be read aloud, and next day the majority of the Assembly, closing their doors on the supporters of Acacius, confirmed the Antioch faith. Such separation was not to be allowed, however, and the Quaestor Leonas, who was the Imperial Commissioner, effected a joint-meeting. The deposed bishops were persuaded to withdraw in the interests of peace, and Acacius made overtures ^{towards} ~~an~~ an agreement on his side by adding to the rejection of the words *ὁμοούσιος* and *ὁμοιούσιος*, the anathematizing of *ἀνόμοιος*, whereby he now thought the Sirmian document might be acceptable to all, since the test-word of every party had been censured. Still the spirit of unanimity was far off, and many strongly objected to all tampering with the Creed, asserting "We are not here to embrace a new faith but to affirm the faith of the Fathers."⁽¹⁾ There was thus a strong resemblance in their sentiments to those of the clerics at Rimini, except that it was to the Antioch (Dedication) Formula that the Easterns looked and not to Nicaea. The Imperial Commissioner, wearied at last of their debates, refused to remain with them any longer, saying "I have been deputed by the Emperor to preside in a Council where unanimity was expected to prevail; but since you cannot come to a mutual understanding I can no longer be present. Go therefore to the Church if you please, and carry on your empty babbling."

The Acacian party would not even be tempted, by the prospect
(2)
of trying Cyril of Jerusalem and the other bishops, to assemble with the rest, who accordingly met alone, deposed the dissenting faction, and dealt with the bishops under charges, according to their merits. They deposed, among other Anomoeans, Eudoxius and appointed a successor in his room. So strong was that bishop's Court influence, however, that this nominee ^{as it subsequently happened,} was seized on his arrival at Antioch and sent into exile.

The delegates of Seleucia then went, according to plan to

- (1) So said Eusebius of Cyzicum. Socrat. IV. 40.
(2) Cyril had been deposed by a Synod under the influence of Acacius, zealous, it is said, of the importance of his See. He had appealed to Caesar, but now submitted his case to this Synod according to the principles laid down by the Eastern Church. (See Socrat. II. 40)

Constantinople, ten from each party and laid their case before the Emperor. The Acacians reached the Court first and incensed him by the story of the refusal of his Creed. He sent orders dispersing the members ^{still remaining at Seleucia} ~~of the Council~~ to their homes, for he might take it peculiarly to heart, that his own Eastern clerics had rejected what the Westerns had been ^{with so much difficulty} ~~so hardly~~ persuaded to accept for their sakes. (1)

Basil was one of the ten deputies of his own party, but, when he urged upon the Emperor the need of silencing the blasphemies of the Anomoeans, he was bidden to be quiet, and was accused of being the cause of the tempest which agitated the Church. (2) Eustathius took up the pleading and succeeded in persuading the Emperor to examine into the faith of Eudoxius and Aetius, and when he turned his attention thither he became incensed with it and ^{ordered the exile of} ~~exiled the~~ latter. Eudoxius said that he was willing to retract the shibboleth of his heresy if *ὁμοούσιος* were rejected also, but Silvanus then said on behalf of the Basilians, "If the Word who is God was not created (*ἐἴ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων οὐκ ἔστι*) then he must be of the same substances as God (*ὁμοούσιος*), (3) thus accepting even the long-hated word. Not only so but they added that while the Emperor had the right of inflicting what punishments he pleased, the right of judging between piety and impiety was theirs and theirs only. It was a novelty that Eastern bishops should take the part of an Athanasius and a Hilary combined. In a fury of rage the Emperor banished them from his presence and from their Sees. Thus Cyril, Basil, Silvanus, Eleusius, Eustathius, on various excuses, (4) one indeed for the trivial offence of not wearing clerical dress when a young man, were deposed and exiled, sharing the summary fate that had been so common lately in the West.

Constantius now had indeed succeeded in making a "Roman peace." Nice and Constantinople, where Rimini and Seleucia had failed, had

(1) Socrat II. 41. (2) Theodoret II. 24. (3) Ibid. (4) Macedonius was also banished but good reasons of tyrannical and cruel actions in his discess were for the coming.

endorsed his Creed. He could not derive any satisfaction from the fact however since only too obviously it had been rejected with new unanimity by both East and West, and he himself and his interference with ecclesiastical affairs had aroused widespread resentment among all the clerics whose judgment was at all of value. He had one small piece of satisfaction left and that was to withdraw some of the privileges of the clergy. By royal edict he refused a claim of the Council of Rimini to certain tax-exemptions, writing with savage satisfaction as we may believe, "On all adjuncts of property (juga) which they possess they are to be strongly urged to pay the treasury dues, and all clerics we order to recognise the payments of dues." (1)

The Church could bear even harder measures without flinching. Her best clerics were in exile here and there all over the empire. In Constantinople the Catholic party made common cause, we are told, with the Novatians. The Imperial Church was not the Church of true Christendom, but had gone forth from it. Not an Athanasius merely but the clerics of the East, once so quiescently led an Emperor in everything, had taken their own way. He had thrown ^{so many} ~~so many~~ honest believers among them ~~about~~ ^{that} out of office ~~and~~ in truth the Church was in the wilderness, ^{while} ~~and~~ the Emperor's minions filled offices for which even he must have known them to be unfit. The inauguration of the great Church of St. Sophia at Constantinople completed the labours of the Council. (2) Eudoxius, the Anomean whose views had once so raised his wrath was his bishop. Thus the plans of wily courtiers were fulfilled, and the Emperor, not blind for all his perverted judgment, might realise that these clerics who were around him were not the Church. He had driven the real Church from him, and had now only a department of Imperial political machinery ⁽³⁾ of which he might well be Head and Chief, as it had no other Head, no ideals but a courtier's, no spirit to animate it but

(1) Cod. Theod. XVI De Episcopis. 15. (2) Sozomen. 20.

(3) According to Arian. he had persecuted the ascetics and exalted all the worldlings in Church-office. (Hulst. Arian. p 40 + 42)

that of the world.

Meanwhile hard things were said of him by the representatives of the true Church.

"Who⁽¹⁾ that beheld him bearing sway over his pretended bishops and presiding in ecclesiastical causes would not justly exclaim that this man was the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel. Having put on the profession of Christianity he lays waste the Churches transgressing their canons, and enforcing the observance of his own decree."

So spake Athanasius for that bishop was very clear at last on the question of non-interference with Church authority. He accused the Emperor of "considering the Church to be a civil senate"⁽²⁾ asked if it was "part of godliness to compel"⁽³⁾ "If bishops are to judge", he wrote, "what has the Emperor to do with the matter? If the Emperor is to threaten, what need of men styled bishops? Where in the world was such a thing heard of? Where had the Church's judgment its force from the Emperor, where was his sentence at all recognised. Many Councils have been, many judgments of the Church, but neither did the Fathers ever argue about them with the Emperor, nor did the Emperor meddle with the concerns of the Church."⁽⁴⁾

It is credible that the personal loyalty of Athanasius was a very great thing. He who had cried, "O Augustus, blessed and beloved of God", and prayed so fervently for him in his Apology, had been slow in expressing his sense of the Church's inalienable liberties, but now he put them forth in plain terms. He added that the Emperor's patronage had made the Church ridiculous through the posting to and fro of bishops to Councils. The heathen, he said, mocked at it, and this was true as we can find in the writings of Ammianus Marcellinus. Arianism, moreover, as he now saw, had been from the beginning a State-fed error, and this was proved then to be the case for when the Church was ^{in a substantial way} ~~practically~~ unanimous

(1) Loc. cit. p. 44. (2) Loc. cit. p. 64 (3) Loc. cit. p. 45.
(4) Loc. cit. p. 53 + 66.

Constantius had scattered it into banishment.

Excluding Lucifer whose fiery nature detracts from the value of his work, the most vigorous denunciations of Constantius are, in Hilary's writings. He too had pleaded once in terms of loyalty but he had had personal insight into the unconstitutional methods of autocracy at Seleucia. It was not his personal injuries which made him speak out, but he felt called to take his stand on the liberty of Christ and asserted that he had nothing to say that was not Christ's on this topic.⁽¹⁾ He described the Emperor as a persecutor who "honours the Church that he may enslave it, kills its soul with gold, flatters it that he may dominate it, and urges unity to the negation of peace." He compared him to his disadvantage with Nero, Decius, and Maxentius, and addressed him as one who lied in calling himself a Christian. At Seleucia and Constantinople he had brought it about that a small party had dominated the majority - Why? "What faith does Constantius believe in?", he asked, "He who is always altering what he has written. Thou takest up, against the doted works of Hosius and the vile deeds of Ursacius and Valens, thine own abominable emendations; and then even thine own emendations are amended or rather damned!"

No plainer speaking was ever addressed to royal personage than this:-

"Cursed to the Emperor may be the Nicaean faith, and its exposition and the name of his dead father whose care the Nicaean faith was, but let him know that he may not forejudge the future. Letters exist in which what you think criminal is taught as piously to be accepted. Hear the holy intelligence of words, hear the undisturbed constitution of the Church, hear the faith professed by the Fathers, hear the confident security of human hope, hear the

(1) Hilary Contra Constantium. § 3.

public consent to the condemnation of heresy, and understand thou art the enemy of divine religion, hateful to the memory of the saints, rebel heir of a pious heritage."

"Audi Ecclesiae imperturbatam constitutionem!" - so Hilary saw the Church, serene and unshaken. Nothing that man could do could assail her. "Sed not licet ut futurum prejudicas!" Emperors die, but the Church lives on, and her future is not in the power of any one save Him who is with her even to the end of the world.

^{at last} Thus, not in the language of mere African sectaries, but of the Churches' wisest and truest sons, was expressed the great truths of the Church's ^{spiritual} independence, and of the inviolable life which is hers, or rather not hers but the Spirit's which lives in her.

Constantius had indeed but short time to seek to interfere more with her liberties. One merit may be mentioned, and that is, that he bore his ecclesiastical unpopularity, even the scathing attacks of such as Lucifer, with singular forbearance. He took no revenge for the bitter things said of him. Perhaps he found out, before his death, that his secularised State Church, was of little political or religious worth to the Empire. One of his last enactments, at all events, was a decree giving encouragement ~~to monastic life, or perhaps only to great~~ ^{private} Christian piety, setting this down as the highest form of public service, "for we know", he explained, "that by religion rather than by public services and labour (or sweat) of the body, the Republic is kept together." Soon after he met his premature death in the campaign against Julian. On such a strange mixture of cruelty and moderation, of childish conceits and violent passions, of suspicion and affability, it is hard to pass judgment. By general opinion his real character was not so corrupt, had he been free from the low influence by which he was always guided. His strong desire for autocracy and his suspicion of any rival in power were the motives which obtruded

(1) Codex Theod. XVI Tit II. 16. This did not favour monasticism, of Athanasius is to be believed regarding Constantius' persecution of the ascetics, but private devotion.

themselves into all his ecclesiastical doings, and these it was, accompanied by small wisdom, great conceit, and low religious views, which speedily evoked from the Church so decided an opposition, and awakened her to grasp to herself, once more, her essential freedom.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RESULTS OF THE POLICY OF THE
SONS OF CONSTANTINE.



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In summarising the results of the policy of the sons of Constantine, we may note first of all the end reached by that method of procedure which the father had begun. The Constantians, except for that interval when the Empire was divided, had pursued the steady plan of using the ecclesiastical state to secure unity in the Empire. Constantius had been faced with the same problem as had confronted his father, and with differences due to their respective gifts of ability rather ^{than} to alteration of method, their policy had been to make the Church uniform and united, in order that it might provide a convenient organisation for infusing the Empire with the spirit of loyalty and fraternity. The final result was one which might have taught even more valuable lessons ~~than~~ those urged by the indignant clerics. At the end of his reign Constantius had a church of one faith, but that was not the body with which Constantine had sought alliance but a ~~mere~~ fragment of it, and one moreover lacking in every effective power for which the State might require its help.

In every place large bodies of Christians were separated from the official bishop. At Alexandria Bishop George found himself in disfavour with the majority of the people. His severity to the Athanasians did not break their spirit to subjection and his ministry was a tale of tyrannical imprisonments and scourgings. His fierce temper did not assist towards a peaceful state of affairs. His anti-pagan zeal led him to attack with armed force the Temple of Serapis,⁽¹⁾ thereby so exciting the anger of the

(1) See Ammian. Marcell. Anacephala (haffci) + Julian Epist. 21 (Hert. 10)

populace that he was driven from the city for a period in the year 358 A.D., when the Athanasians showed that they were still an active body by returning and occupying the Churches. He soon, ^{however}, returned vowing to make many suffer for his exile. His episcopate was one dependent at every turn upon the power and menace of the law. Similarly ~~at Antioch~~ when Eudoxius was translated to Constantinople, and Melitius called to the Antioch episcopate, the Acacians supposed him to be a man of their own broad party who might reconcile these divisions, but he proved to be an ardent member of the school of Basil, and was hastily deposed. His fine character won him great popularity, however, and there were now two bodies in Antioch, Eustathians⁽¹⁾ and Melitians, whose rivalry was so great that there can have been left but few supporters for the official bishop. At Ancyra Marcellus, orthodox or no, had left behind a strong party which Basil had found difficult to control. The ^{pretext for} ~~ground of~~ the latter's deposition had indeed been over-severity in this cause. Now were added to this protestant party his followers who were violent against the Anomoeans. At Jerusalem, the removal of Cyril might give Acacius of Caesarea the pride of place for which he was so eager in his province, but we know that the congregation of the Holy City greeted the return of their bishop afterwards with an enthusiasm, which makes evident with how little heart they had borne the interregnum. As for Acacius himself at Caesarea, his own peculiar tactics may have secured peace among the people of his diocese; but his partner in broad principles George of Laodicea, had not only old orthodoxy but new heresy to contend with in his. At Constantinople where feeling had run so high between Paul, and Macedonius, where Paul in days of power had cast the Arian consecrated Host to the dogs, and

(1) The supporter of the Bp. Eustathius deposed during the reign of Constantine I.

Macedonius when in the ascendant had behaved with unparalleled brutality both to Orthodox and Novatian, peace could not be expected. Now Macedonius in his turn had been driven forth, and one wonders, with Orthodoxy and Novatianism making common cause, whom Eudoxius had saved the Court, of which he was so prime a favourite, to listen to the irreverent badinage of his pulpit utterances.

In the West, a similar state of matters prevailed. There the hand of Constantius had fallen most heavily. He had come to dominion of that part of the world with a bias against her clerics. His officials had gone to every See of importance after the Council of Milan with demands for obedience to his two decrees, that the Eastern clerics be acknowledged and that Athanasius be condemned. He had swept away the Metropolitans. Felix in Rome with his congregation of six, ^{and} Auxentius at Milan who could speak no Latin, were typical products of his work, and although now the Roman Bishop was restored on such terms as might secure his non-interference, no such powerful influence, as might have been wielded from that episcopate, was going forth to further any imperial design.

The Church of the Purple maintained by Civil Power, was a creation or emanation of the Court, a State-made thing, and dependent for its very life and being upon the State. It was not that Church which Constantine, looking for some power to bind the Empire into union, had sought in alliance. It brought to the political machinery of the empire no vitalising ^{or} unifying force. It was in a condition of mere parasitic dependence, and a source of weakness. It was not, for all the Imperial care, at unity with itself even now. The exiled bishops of Homoiousian persuasion (Macedonians, ^{or Babilians} Marathonians they were sometimes called) had

supporters within it, and the Anomoeans carried on controversy with them. Acacius had need yet again to change even the creed of Nice and Constantinople. A ruler might now feel that for the purposes of polity the support of such a Church was a wasteful and thankless effort. She served no imperial end. The State-made ecclesiastical body had no influence with the people, inspired no loyalty, gave the commonwealth no added coherence or sense of fellowship. Perhaps therefore the last of the Constantians to value Christianity showed perception of its real political worth in a death-bed repentance when he spoke so warmly of the civic service paid by the truly pious. He had realised perhaps that as a piece of political machinery for a political end, the Church ^{was} ~~is~~ not serviceable; ^{and} that when she became a mere tool or instrument she ceased to be a Church, whereas Christians working out sincerely from their own stand point the ideals of their faith might confer incalculable benefit upon the State. Whether such a moral had been read from the signs of the times or not, it might at least have become evident that if the Church was to be of service it must be accorded a greater degree of freedom from interference than Constantius had allowed it. The effects of Constantian dominance were such as must impress any enlightened ruler, and ^{they would} stand in history as warnings to those who would take guidance from the experience of the past.

The principles of the Church's sovereignty had at all events been established in directions which would ever be authoritative in her own mind. In the first place the deification or Semi-deification of any person without spiritual prerogatives of rulership would ever thereafter be known as contrary to her essential principles. In this respect the situation had been easier

for the Church than in the previous reign.

The younger rulers had been trained within the circle of Christian ideas, and although we may not say that the characteristic thoughts of heathenism were thus entirely excluded, their influence was not so powerful as in the case of their father. Constantine had, however, been deified at his death by his heathen subjects and the word "divus" was certainly applied to one of his sons.⁽¹⁾ Applications were still received from cities to set up statues of the Emperor to the very end of the period, and although customs savouring of idolatry, such as that of offering incense to the Emperor by the military, had apparently been abandoned,⁽²⁾ the atmosphere of the Caesar cult was still that in which the Church, as ~~regarded~~ ^{regard} those external to ^{her,} ~~it~~, had to live. No son of Constantine, while the Empire was divided, showed however any tendency to exalt his person with quasi-sacred associations, ~~but~~ ^{the} preamble of Constantius to the creed propounded at Seleucia and Rimini ~~did~~ betray something of the same inveterate tendency of Roman imperialism. It was, however, a mild assumption of divine place in the scheme of creation, compared to that which some clerics had been prepared to allot to Constantine. The wide-spread indignation which it caused, leading, as we are informed, to an attempt to recall it, speaks of the tenderness of the Church's susceptibilities in this respect, and so further justified the hypothesis that the Arian controversy derived much of its heat from the suspicion that the place of the Church's Lord was in danger. We cannot claim that the influence of these heathen ideas was destroyed and utterly wiped out. The future was to show that Byzantianism, the support of which was a conception very much akin to the old imperial cult, would yet rear its head and flourish. In such a task as ours

(1) See Monody on Constantine II. (2) See event in Julian's reign. Gregory Inverto I. 83. agt Julian.

at present, we take, however, as it were, a cross-section of the moving stream of living thought, and thus detect most plainly the forces working and growing, whereby such older traditional ideas, although they might come here and there to power, were doomed to final extinction. So viewing the matter we can say that the achievement of the first half of the Fourth Century was the establishment of the doctrine of the full ^{and unique} Godhead of the Saviour as the mind of the Church, *and as the central idea for the crystallisation of her own identity in all possible relations.*

This victory too is more strongly evident in the second period of the Constantians than in the first. It is a pathetic misreading of events which sees as the effect of half a century of State-rule the Church given over to Arianism. In a previous chapter we have sought to make evident the standpoints of the various warring elements. The Creeds of Antioch, the Macrostich, and the ~~Sir~~inian formula of 351 are in our mind the proof of what was there contended, that the force of Anti-Homousianism was derived from the fear of such human views of Christ as might lie in Sabellian ideas. We note further how the theories of such a thinker as Photinus caused a rapproch^ement of the West towards the East, while in the same way theories such as those of Aetius moved the East over almost to the very acceptance of Western terminology. With their eye upon different dangers and wrestling with the difficulties of different languages, they were in East and West, to our mind, seeking to do the same thing. Their debates had not the motive of minute correctness on points connected with transcendental generation, such as was the actual Arian issue, but, as we might suppose from the depth of interest aroused in it, some fundamental issues connected with the great opposition of Empire and Church which had just been made pressing. Athanasius.

absorbed in the details of the controversy and viewing it, as was natural to him, even to the last, from the point of view of its Alexandrian origin has fixed the opinion of it which is now generally current. We ^{see} ~~say~~, however, how misleading he ^{is} ~~might be~~ in his references to Constantius' efforts to have the West recognise "the Arians", where other writers speak of "the Orientals". Some writers apparently believe ^{from such statements of his,} ~~this still who affirm~~ that Constantius, because he was an Arian, i.e., for the sake of some opinion concerned with generation ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ transcendental time, ~~he~~ laid out immense resources of his empire ~~and~~ to induce his subjects to agree with him and to abandon their own views. To affirm this of any pedant would be absurd, far more of one who plainly showed that he did not understand even the Anomoean creed to contain any serious innovation. It is surely plain that all Constantius' concern was to have one Church, and that, personally, he would have cared very little what its creed might be, provided it were at unity. Similarly, therefore, we believe that this particular dogmatic point was not the Church's great interest either, but ^{that} her immense desire, working both in East and West, ^{was} ~~to~~ to express accurately and in a way that would put it beyond all question, the supreme divine sovereignty, above all possible human rivalry, of her Lord Jesus Christ. Can we imagine the situation ^{of} ~~the~~ "Third Race" whose ruler had been called by their foes a mere peasant of Galilee, and who were bidden for three centuries to bow down to the divine Emperor of Rome on pain of death or suffering. Their retort had been that their King was more divine than the Caesar, and in proof of this, they adduced the sacred traditions of Jewish Messiahship and philosophical speculations connected with the doctrine of the Logos. If, after granting them peace and liberty, the representatives

of the Caesars should interfere with their affairs to induce them to use language which seemed inadequately to safeguard this point, was it not inevitable that the greatest disturbance should be created. If emperors, who still ^{appropriated} ~~used~~ titles such as they had long ago taken from all human beings to apply to their Lord only, sought to coerce them on any plea to use words which they ^{thought} ~~flavoured~~ of false doctrine on this topic, was not fierce opposition inevitable. We believe that Constantius cared nothing for his various formulae and Constantine nothing for Homousios. They succeeded in ^{making it} ~~showing~~ ^{plain however,} that the Church cared very much for the divine sovereignty of Christ, and ^{they} ~~raised~~ thereby so much agitation on the subject that any claims, which the Emperors themselves might have ^{put forward} ~~made~~ to a divine place in her scheme of things, if not made forever impossible, ^{were} ~~was~~ revealed at least as incapable of conscientious justification. Thus the commonplace of historical moralising upon the folly of these debates, while secularisation and low morals crept in unheeded, is based on a total misconception. They were guarding the really vital point of non-secularisation, and in fact fought the State upon the fundamental issue so that thereafter Church and State might continue to exist as separate entities. Every other religious force or ideal ^{which had risen during many generations,} ~~had~~ been absorbed into that State which they faced, but Christianity kept itself aloof. Its fate was not to be handed down thereafter in a scheme of laws of the civil power, but to coexist with the legal-system as a separate entity, working out its own ideals by its own means of government. It achieved that first and foremost by a response to the danger, so sensitive that we, at this date, almost fail to note ^{its exciting} ~~the existing~~ cause, and so effective that in that hour it throned Jesus for all time above all possible kings.

The second point in the establishment by the Church of her independent sovereignty was the realisation of two principal means whereby it might become embodied and active.

The Bishops of Rome of this period are clothed, we see with a new dignity. The potentialities of some of the Church legislation of Constantine's reign ^{have} ~~has~~ actualised in a Julius and a Liberius, in whom one can detect the precursors of a line of Popes. Constantius' jealousy of Rome and things Roman enables us to discern the effects of the change of capital. The strongest power of Rome also he detects to reside in its ecclesiastical throne. Constantius appeared to be strongly of opinion, as we saw, that Liberius and his predecessor had added to their office and magnified their pretensions. ^{So} he must have complained to the legates at Milan. Liberius was unconscious of having done so. Julius too even when he laid claim to some authority over Alexandria appealed to ancient usage. It was indeed the case that Rome had civil authority over Alexandria, and ~~we see how the~~ ^{the} ecclesiastical rulers took naturally to themselves the rights of the ancient imperial city. This was brought about by the situation which lies behind the saying, "All roads lead to Rome." When appeals to the Emperor were decreed in the West to pass through the Roman Pontiff's hand, no one would dispute that settlement. It was their natural direction. Anyone looking for guidance in a disciplinary difficulty would naturally appeal to the most influential bishop within convenient distance. The old capital was on the readiest line of communication for a wide area to whom Constantinople was remote. It had prestige both ecclesiastically and civilly. Its bishops were shrewd and gifted with administrative talent. More and more were they appealed to until what had

become customary was sanctioned from that very circumstance by ecclesiastical canon. Thus the Bishop of Rome, who was a shadowy figure in the background in the reign of Constantine, shines out in this period as a powerful luminary. He is not found at Councils any more, having become a prince best represented at such gatherings by commissioners. "What portion are you of the Universe?" Constantius asked him. He would not have replied in the terms of John Knox, to a similar question "A subject born within the same and how abject that ever I be in your eyes a profitable member within the same". If he had dealt with it in a similar way he must have revealed the sense of right to govern which had become part of his office, ^{and} the sure authority with which he and his predecessor had been clothed, in the process of continually giving answers and rulings on a multitude of questions presented to them from all parts of the Western Church. Thus the Western ecclesiastical state had found a representative embodiment of its sovereign rights, and one might hazard the opinion that the attitude of the East in the latest period of Constantius' reign would show that, had there continued to be greater civil cohesion, the whole Church might have acquiesced in the same regime.

In the East, however, a different movement had begun. The West now discovered ^{certain} a weariness of Synods⁽¹⁾, but the East had no diminution of enthusiasm. They ordained that their appeals should go up from local to general council. Constantinople had no apostolic associations and outside of it there were too many rivals. Antioch stood challenged ~~over~~ by Caesarea, Aelia had ⁽²⁾ ancient claims, Nicomedia practical modern ones. With too many aspirants to allow of a settlement the Synodical method was inevitable. It provided the required machinery of government, and

(1) e.g. Protest of Iliberius against Synod of Milan and weariness to be gone of bishops at Rimini.
(2) Jerusalem.

had ^{many} ~~many~~ advantages. In it lay ~~the~~ great power of a democratic method of administration. Its cumbrousness and expense militated against it, and some of ~~its~~ results were not such as would inspire full confidence. We note, however, that Liberius suggested recourse to it in his final duel with the Emperor, and, in point of fact, that in the subsequent events, whereas personal ^{freedom} ~~freedom~~ showed its inherent weakness, namely the liability of an individual to be overborne, the Synods showed their strength. They could be dispersed but not coerced. Also, whereas no theory of a special papal inspiration was forthcoming, the doctrine of ~~the~~ divine guidance of Synods was receiving emphasis both in East and West. Nicaea was throned in the Church's mind above the Emperor, who was warned of the impiety of tampering with its decisions. Both at Rimini and at Seleucia, statements as to ~~the~~ ^{the} sacred authoritativeness of past Councils were made. To this age perhaps belong the forged letters of Constantine which ^{state} ~~state~~ that principle. It was certainly the mind of the Church that the earthly governor should bow down to their authority in matters of faith at least. The general loyalty of the clerics to these convictions was expressed in no equivocal way, when the pressure of Constantius resulted in the acceptance of exile and ^{of} ~~expulsion~~ from office by large numbers of them, ^{refusing} ~~who refused~~ to recognise his authority to dictate upon matters, on which great Synods at Nicaea or ^{Antioch} ~~Antioch~~ had already pronounced. The establishment of the sovereignty of the ecclesiastical council, as supreme in its own sphere, was a determinative step in the establishment of the Church's independence, and the discovery of an effective weapon against all secular aggression.

The vital issues of the Church's sovereignty were thus conserved, and ~~an~~ effective embodiments discovered for it. It was certainly a fact that Constantius had found it possible to establish some portion of the Church in a position wherein its autonomy was largely lost or quiescent. The Eusebian party had increased in strength,

so far as we can observe. Acacius was a natural successor to Eusebius, and various Churchmen were too much mere Court-favourites to be expected to see ecclesiastical affairs from a spiritual point of view. While, however, there were many more clerics of this type than existed earlier, we cannot fail to note that they were ^{not} in a ~~great~~ majority over those who still threw emphasis upon the divine as opposed to the political conception of the Church. The divided Synods of Rimini and Seleucia ^{were} ~~was to be still~~ further divided into two parties at each gathering, and the political peace ^{parties do} ~~party, and~~ not appear to have been by any means powerful enough to overrule ^{completely} the strong doctrinarians. We note too that the East which gained under Eusebian leadership the credit for a greater proportion of the former, by its painstaking creeds of Antioch and Sirmium in this period removes this impression. The State-party probably revealed its tendency in the emergence of such a type as Eudoxius. Anomoeanism bears certainly the impression in his hands of a quite irreligious irreverence. The attempts of Acacius on its behalf, if it was the anti-Christian theory it was said to be, show that broad principles tend to broaden, until the historical traditions of Christianity may be swamped in a mere political humanitarian aim to maintain the established order of peace and good discipline. The vigorous stand of the party of Basil, therefore, and the support which he received, shows that the general conscience of the Church despite exiles, threatenings, and severe treatment, ~~would~~ still adhered to strong emphasis upon faith. Thus are seen to have been formed sinews of strength by which the general church might be judged able always to resist a descent into mere conservatism and towards the ^{place} ~~place~~ of a purely administrative ^{functionary} ~~functions~~ within the State.

The history of the period is instructive also from the point of view of the consideration the Church's authority over its own creed. Constantius' effort to enforce a formula was a manifest failure, even although in its later stages, it was not an external production ^{which he used} but the work of conferences of her own clerics. The failure might be argued to be inherent in any faith thus drawn up between State and Church, even where the former is only to act as its custodian or guardian, ^{for such} ~~such indeed~~ was very nearly the position of Constantius at the later Councils. It might be said of course that the error lay in seeking so to legislate a formula, when faith had not yet reached definiteness, and especially while the atmosphere of suspicion hung over the whole matter. The necessity of ^{such a} ~~the~~ case is however a creed already settled and so, as it were, a lowest common denominator of current beliefs. There will therefore be ever, one might predict, an Acacius eager to leave room for a Eudoxius, and also a Basil, lynx-eyed upon this very point. The question is controversial and we cannot maintain that there is evidence enough in this period of history to answer it definitely one way or other. He, who would argue in favour of ~~the Church's sole custody of its principles~~ ^{confessional standards,} cannot fail however to draw many a striking illustration from these events. Unanimity was so plainly near at hand on more than one occasion and was so evidently dissipated by ~~that~~ ^{the} formal legalistic method of procedure, which ~~was inevitable when the State was brought into relation with~~ ^{the discussions,} ~~creed,~~ that one might retain a pessimistic opinion of the value of the State's interference in this sphere. It might at least be confidently affirmed that it ^{had been found to be the great source of} ~~would be found an abundant cause of~~ ecclesiastical disunity, ~~unless used with the utmost restraint.~~

With regard to the secularisations which had taken

place in the reign of Constantine we note in this period evidences of a sound reaction. With regard to the penitential system there is indeed no evidence of a change, other than that the outed Catholics and the Novatians are said to have made common cause in Constantinople. This meant that faced with the alternative of native freedom and State-government, they chose the former, even at the expense of renouncing the hopes of making room within the Church for the world. That was, however, an isolated case and we have no information as to what agreements the bodies made together.

For On the subject of the use of wealth, however, there were events of this period which showed the development of a new conscience.

As we saw the younger Constantians had increased this to an enormous extent. Both Constans and Constantius had a policy of making peace by scattering gifts in all directions. The effect which it had in Africa was the solemn warning of Donatus regarding bribery. Then there was the still more striking protest of the Circumcellions in favour of some communistic system. It was evident that some ^{of} the Catholic Churchmen, ^{also} ~~however~~, were dismayed at the results of this lavish endowment. Councils noted as we saw the jealousy, usury, and pride, bred by many of their immunities and privileges. On our cross-section view, we see thus the corruption of wealth increased and increasing, and the protest against it growing also, and not only in monks and Sectaries, but in the minds of Churchmen of all ranks. Especially noteworthy are the denunciations of Hilary upon the evils of the Constantian system. His writings ring with the words bribery, tyranny by blandishment, killing with gold. Thus the needed corrective force was arising. Hilary indeed appealed to the Emperor to leave the Church alone, as it used to be, rather than so

corrupt it. This might express the desire of many. The error of ~~excess in one secular~~ ^{one} means ~~for~~ fulfilling her ~~secular~~ task had thus been discovered, and there was a strongly awakened conscience on the matter of Church wealth.

Still more evident had become the dangers attaching to the use of civil force. Athanasius, who had once used it against the Melitians, was convinced of the evil of it when he saw it in the hands of Gregory. Philagrius, Prefect of Egypt, appears to have been ~~exemplary in his absolute impartiality, but the weapon~~ ^{absolutely impartial in his violence, but the weapon appeared} ~~a very different one when the Orthodox saw it in hands of the Arian.~~ ^{looked very differently in the hands of the enemy.} Valens and ^{Similarly} Ursacius [^]complained of force, and Hosius urged them therefore not to use it. The Synod of Sardica asked that the Emperor should forbid magistrates to interfere in any ecclesiastical matter on any plea of making provision for the Church. Hilary renounced secular force utterly in the cause of religion and said that, if even for the sake of right and true doctrine force were to be applied, the Bishops would protest.

These were new ideas, and they were not deep-seated convictions of the Church never to be forgotten in all her after-history. They showed however that experience teaches even the wise. The result of such pleading was a law removing the clerics from civil jurisdiction. Experience might teach again upon that point, but, even within the period before us, there was division of opinion as to whether the magistrate was of service or not to the Church. What sort of a Synod was Tyre, asked the Egyptians, at which only a Count spoke? What sort of a Synod had Nicaea been ^{it might} ~~be retorted~~ [^] where an Emperor by all accounts took a large share in debates? [^] ~~Whether~~ did Athanasius go from Tyre but to the higher magistrate? He was pleased that there were no magistrates at Sardica, but the

Easterns felt cheated of fairness there, on the very point^{too} which he had had brought to the civil commissioner's notice at Tyre. As we saw, the triumphant party at Sardica were rather nervous upon this point and strongly emphasised their ~~Emperors~~^{from the Emperors} orders to judge of the whole matter, at the very time^{at which} that they wrote requesting that civil magistrates should interfere in Church affairs no more. In the Church's attitude we see indeed an almost consistent consistency. George is Constantius' spy to the Athanasians. Athanasius before that, secured from disturbance on his entry by the threats^{wrong from Constantius, did not consider that he} ~~of forfeiture of the corn supplies~~^{appeared as} must have ~~been~~^{been} Constans' spy to the Melitians.⁽¹⁾ Even Hilary's eloquent appeal for an end of all civil force stumbles over the question of turbulent heretics. The inconsistency is of course human nature, but it is also ^{inherent in the matter itself.} ~~part of the problem. Like all other things the~~ Civil Magistrate in Church affairs has his use and abuse. There is in the ^{Constantian} Church's life ~~of our survey then~~ the mood which would dispense with ~~him~~^{the Civil Magistrate} utterly, and the other which would use him ~~still~~^{extensively.} Down through the history of the Church the same division of opinion has existed and the same rapid change of opinion^{has} been manifested by the same people in different circumstances. All we can say of it is, that it has been in the Church's consciousness from the very beginning. It proves, probably, that the Civil Magistrate has his use and abuse, and that, not, by any principle or doctrine settled once for all, can the difference between the two be established, but only by practical experiment in ^{the} working out of the Church's ~~of her~~^{are} ideals. The aims of both are largely similar, but the principles governing both^{are} different. What mutual help they can afford each other in their labours must be a matter of circumstances and opportunities. Hitherto the Church when she could use it had used State-power too much as its servant, the servant not of its

(1) One guesses that Constans' name stood for that of Maghencius in the original form of the fable of the Melitians.

final end but of its different parties. The succeeding reign was to reveal to her that State-government ^{could} ~~can~~ be most unjust and inefficient when it ^{was} ~~is~~ absorbed with the task of propagating religion.

CHAPTER XIV.

JULIAN'S RELIGIOUS POLICY.



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Our authorities for the reign of Julian and for his ecclesiastical policy are first of all his own writings, especially his Letters. The dating of these has been wrought upon with great care by Wright in the Loeb Classical Edition⁽¹⁾, who has also separated with care the authentic epistles from those which bear evidences of forgery. Of longer writings an important one for our purpose is the Letter to a Priest, a full statement of Julian's policy for the revivifying of the pagan religious system. The Misopogon, for those who can read between the lines of a bitter satire, is full of biographical information of great value. The proviso is important however, as Schaff for example credits the Emperor with a high degree of personal uncleanness, misled by his manner of gibing at the luxuriousness and effeminacy of the Antiochenes. Its very passion is sign-manual of its sincerity especially where satire is forgotten in vehement self-defence. The Letter to the Athenians contains ^{also} important biographical matter. His religious ideas and their philosophical presuppositions may be studied in the "Hymn to Helios", and the "Mother of the Gods. His opinion of Christianity is to be found in the "Against the Galileans" reconstructed from Cyril's refutation. The "Caesars" and the Eulogies of Constantius contain statements with regard to his predecessors but are valueless for determining his real estimate of their policy and achievements. The eulogies ^{from their nature} were bound to be insincere and the satirical drama could not express strict justice. They reveal to us, however, just how much Julian was capable of saying what he did not believe in unjust depreciation and in

(1) Vol. III. See also Bidez et Cumont Edit. Paris 1922. The letters are here quoted in the numbering of Wright in the Loeb Classical Edit. with Hertlein's numbering in brackets.

flattering adulation, and must be remembered in connection with his words on other occasions. On the other hand he wrote extremely quickly and usually under stress of emotion. We may accept the fact that there is a vein of exaggeration in most of what he says. Where he dislikes he is better, where he has some affection or enthusiasm he intensifies it in the characteristic matter of current literary taste. He succumbs frequently to the temptation to strike an attitude, but ^{apart from} ~~with~~ these foibles ^{he} gives the presentation rather of a certain simplicity ⁽¹⁾ than of that deep calculating spirit of malice and intrigue with which opponents credited him and which many historians have accepted as the explanation of his actions. ⁽²⁾

Gregory Nazianzenus seems to be the one contemporary authority who credited him with a nature prone to underhand scheming and this seems to be a supposition, chiefly founded upon his known opposition to Christianity not being manifested in acts of violence and repression. More creditable explanations might be forthcoming, however, for we remember that the heathen Zosimus attributed to Constantine for similar reasons "a concealed malice". Gregory knew him as a young man when he was forced to conceal to some extent his religious views, but even then he seems to have given evidence of his sincere opinions on Gregory's own showing, for we can scarcely believe the statement of the latter that his forebodings arose entirely from ^{the future Emperor's} ~~certain~~ nervous gestures and physical ~~features~~ characteristics. ^{his} It was probably known to all ~~the~~ fellow-scholars and companions ^{that} ~~of the future emperor, that he was not~~ from the age of ^{twenty} ~~onwards he was not a Christian in thought,~~ ⁽³⁾ ~~a Christian in thought~~ although he conformed outwardly. Such a position might well suggest duplicity of mind to the enthusiastic Gregory, but from his accommodation in youth to what he might think the necessities of his situation, one can scarcely argue an inherent falseness thereafter ~~may be~~ ^{ever} in all that he ~~afterwards~~ wrote or said.

- (1) See e.g. letter 19 (Hert. 78)
 (2) As for example Schaff's History of the Church.
 (3) See letter 47 (Hert. 51)

Allowing therefore for the exaggerations of a litterateur, and the habit of "posing" which he could not always escape, allowing for the fact that he is not always just to himself or to others, from the desire to say something clever, or to express his bitterness or his impulsive enthusiasms, we may accept his writings as a fairly trustworthy source from which to gather his ideals and purposes in his imperial task. Of other authorities Ammianus Marcellinus is the most reliable. To him Julian was something of a hero under whom he had served in the Persian campaign. He gives however not too biassed a picture of his general. Eutropius is brief, ^{but} ~~and~~ penetrative. Libanius was no doubt an enthusiastic admirer but since in a eulogy one is tempted to ^{faint} ~~paint~~ one's own ideal rather than the actual person, he is at times too flattering, at others, because of his own pedantic conceptions, less than just. As an instance of ^{the latter} ~~this~~ tendency we may take the statement that Julian commonly set aside, in the administration of justice, principles of equity to administer the strict law. Ammianus is at pains, of express purpose we would suppose, to tell us that he did not pursue such a custom, ^{indeed} ~~which~~ would have been absurd in an Emperor. Of Christian authorities Gregory Nazianzenus ⁽¹⁾ and Rufinus are the best as the nearest to the time. Allowance must be made for the fact that Gregory's Oration is that style of composition called an invective, ~~which distorts his outlook.~~ Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret and others are dependent upon these sources, and Zosimus is similarly an unoriginal writer on this topic. Chrysostom "Contra Julianum et Gentiles," though more independent, has no juster appreciation of its theme than Gregory's work. Gregory and Rufinus are our authorities for the Church events of this period, to which must be added the important

(1) Orations IV & V quoted here as First & Second Invective.

documents, "The Tomus ad Antiochenos" (in Mansi Concél.Sacr. Collect III.) the letters of Athanasius Ad Rufinianum and De Fide ad Imperatorem Jovianum. Also important information is wedged in between wild statements in Philostorgius Book VII.

Constantius' orders for the transference of the Gallic legions to the Eastern field of war were received by Julian in the winter of 359-360 A.D.⁽¹⁾ Julian was declared Augustus in February, 360, ~~and~~^{but} it was not until July of the following year that any opportunity offered the rival emperors of approaching one another for a settlement of the issue between them. Meanwhile Julian had made no declaration of any proposed change in the matter of religious policy. He attended the services of the feast of Epiphany at Vienna in 3rd January, 361. As Miss Gardner⁽²⁾ has shrewdly pointed out, there was a connection between that festival and the "Birthday of the Unconquered Sun", to which he afterwards wished to have accorded due honour. It may have been in his mind at this period that a coalescence of the two faiths ~~were~~^{was} possible. Open references to "the gods" occur in his letters previous to this date, so that we cannot suppose that there was any ~~general~~ concealment at that time of his pagan leanings. In the course of the period up to July, he, however, gave more definite indications that he intended to restore the ancient cult. ~~In his campaign against Constantius he wrote a letter which he wrote in defence of his actions to the Athenians, defence of his action to the Roman Senators and to the Athenians.~~^{His open admiration of it is expressed in that}
⁽³⁾ A letter to Alypius, who from his title of "brother" may have been a fellow-initiate in the Mithraic cultus, contains an allusion to Julian's effort to "revive what had fallen on evil days". Sometime in this period probably he wrote the "Kronia"^(3a) which has not survived but which we can guess was a philosophical defence of Sun-worship similar to the Oration,^{called} the Hymn to King Helios. After the death of

(1) See p. 185 of this Thesis.
(2) Julian, Philosopher-Emperor, Alice Gardner. (London 1906) (3) Letter 6 (Hert. 29)
(3a) See Oration IV. 157c.

Constantius he gave ~~open thanks to the~~ ^{thanks to the ancient} gods above all to Helios for saving him from "suffering or inflicting irreparable ill". He ascribed his action ~~in~~ moving against the late Emperor to direct divine leading. (1) "Never for a moment" he wrote to his uncle Julian, did I wish to slay Constantius. Why then did I come? Because the gods expressly ordered me and promised me safety if I obeyed them, but if I stayed, what I pray no god may do to me". The events which occurred previous to the Battle of Milvian Bridge ~~are~~ ^{were} thus repeated, but on this occasion the source of mysterious leading ~~was~~ ^{was} clearly interpreted as coming from the heathen Sun-god. At an early date might therefore be expected a change in the settled religious policy of the Empire.

The psychological question as to the reasons of Julian's ~~adherence~~ ^{conversion} to the pagan faith has been differently answered. He had been brought up in the Christian religion and may even have filled the office in the Church of 'Reader'. It is possible that he had been baptised, so at least it is reported by Christian historians, who attribute his immunity from the operative grace of the sacrament to some secret ritual. (2) It has remained a problem how one of his intellectual gifts and moral enthusiasm ~~should~~ ^{could} remain blind to the excellences of Christian teaching, but it might easily be a fact that the training of his early days would not suffice to win him to the faith. Many writers have pointed out that the religion of Constantius, originator of so much evil to his family and to himself, could not be ~~un~~attractive to him. Julian, however, had discernment enough to distinguish between the religion itself and its unworthy representatives, and to our knowledge he had the acquaintance of many, for example, Basil the Great, ⁽³⁾ who might have set it in a better light. Others have attributed his disgust to the distorted view of the Gospel supposed to be given by Arian teachers.

- (1) letter 9 (Hert. 13) (2) Gregory First Inverctive. 14 + 52.
 (3) letter 26 (Hert. 12.) letter 81 (Hert. 75.) is not authentic.

Eusebius of Constantinople had been his instructor in his very tender years and one, so essentially an ecclesiastic, would perhaps not be an ideal ~~instructor~~^{instructor} of youth. We must remember, however, that he must have been in contact all through his life with Christians of every type. If Aetius, the Anomoean was a fellow-student, so were Basil, Gregory of Nazianza, Gregory's brother, and others of their character. The fact that the influence of sophists such as Maximus predominated with him was of his own choice. The dominant influence of his early life was Mardonius,⁽¹⁾ his eunuch pedagogue, of whom he ever speaks in the warmest affection. He remembered, long afterwards, his parting from this man and the flooding memories it brought of happy labours and candid talks together. To that early influence he attributed his establishment upon the path of hardy self-denial and austerity which he followed. This man also implanted in him the deep love of Plato, Socrates, Aristotle and Theophrastus and set before him the philosophic way of life. All this Julian confesses in that satire which probably is his most emotional utterance and sets forth his sense of the manner in which he felt himself unjustly judged by certain of his subjects. It is, thus, a sincere apology for his life, and from it we learn its two great governing passions, the love of literature, and the hatred of luxurious effeminacy. Mardonius may have been a Christian. He could scarcely at least be a vigorous opponent of the faith, but Julian learned from him not his creed, but his enthusiasms, a devotion to learning and books, and a virtue of the ascetic, Stoic type which scorned all comforts. Somehow Julian also conceived of Christianity as opposed to both these things. We can find indeed even in Christian writers of education, such as Gregory and Augustine, so much contempt for the ancient writers, even while they quote them, as might arouse the fear that

(1) Misopogon 352, Oration VII To Sallust 241.

the ancient poetry, drama, and rhetoric of Greece and Rome might be lost in a scheme of things altogether Christian. Julian might foresee indeed some of the features of the Dark Ages, and perhaps in a time of Monastic protests against all that belonged to the world, there were elements which justified his fears. His idea that Christians were morally loose and luxurious is more difficult to explain. Surely the monks, if some of them despised learning, were plainly austere in their self-discipline, and the more easy-living clerics, ~~as~~^{if} George of Cappadocia was one, showed a just appreciation of literature.⁽¹⁾ Julian had just the type of mind however to be eclectic in his distastes, while he himself gave all honour to an austere morality which he sought to establish upon a foundation of ancient writings, ~~of~~^{which had} low ethical value, and of revived ~~of~~^{abounding in} debauched associations. The workings of his mind take us into the region of human psychology wherein contradictions abound. We can understand that, with his severe ideas as to conduct, he would find much in Court Christianity to make him think that the new faith had not the power claimed for it, if he did not indeed consider it to be the cause of present slackness. His nature, one would guess, had a strong animistic bent and an exaggeration of that desire for signs and auspices which was the chief support of heathen worship. These, combined with personal resentment against many prominent and important Christians, and the fact that the happiest period of his early life was spent among the philosophers of Athens, might explain how Christianity failed to hold his allegiance. Once he had drifted from it, it was natural that he should be more heathen than the heathen, and earn from them the title of "superstitious".⁽²⁾ Indeed from his Christian training he took towards the old cultus ~~on~~ an attitude

(1) Letter of Julian 23 (Hert. 9) (2) *Ammian XXV. 4. 17.*

of devotion ~~natural in that circle of ideas~~ ^{which was} ~~but~~ rather incongruous in ~~that~~ setting. It was not surprising that one of his family should exalt to the supreme place the "Sol Invictus" so evident on the coinage of the earlier Constantians. To treat this deity with the prayerful self-consecrated worship of an ardent Christian monk was however an innovation which ~~would astonish~~ ^{astounded} the heathen themselves, and yet such was the religion of Julian, as revealed even in these early letters before he had commenced to publish the decrees of his future policy.

Humanity might be expected of his administration, whatever were his views. ⁽¹⁾ He avoided ~~allowing any~~ ^{the exhibition of a} revengeful spirit ~~to enter into~~ his treatment of the partisans of Constantius, and by ordering a just trial for all accused of treason, adopted a better procedure in such matters than had occurred to Constantine or Constantius. He recalled all the clerics exiled by Constantius upon account of religious differences at an early period in the year 362 A.D. We have a letter to Aetius confirming this amnesty which contains, however, ~~disrespectful~~ ^{disrespectful} allusions to the Christian faith. ⁽²⁾

"I have remitted their sentence of exile for all persons whatsoever who were banished by the blessed Constantius on account of the folly of the Galileans. To thee I not only send remission but, mindful of old acquaintanceship and intimacy, an invitation to come to me. Use — a public conveyance as far as my camp (or court) and one extra horse".

At an early date in the same year an invitation ⁽³⁾ was sent to Basil the Great who also was known to Julian from student days. An impression was given, in the letter ~~of~~ ^{which issued} this invitation, that at the imperial court there prevailed an atmosphere of mutual

(1) Ammian. Marcell. XXV. 4. 9. (2) Letter 15 (Hert. 31) (cf Rufinus, X. 27.

(3) Letter 26 (Hert 12)

toleration "Although", Julian wrote, "we refute and criticise one another with appropriate frankness, whenever it is necessary, we love one another as the most devoted friends". He also thought it of value to give that zealous monk a picture of a Court in which flattery was absent and where hard work and quiet relaxation were the regime. Here was no atmosphere of revelry for, said the Emperor, "When I have kept vigil it was not on my own account but rather probably, on account of everybody else".

Aetius accepted this invitation to the Court at Constantinople but apparently Basil did not. There were, however, many Christians in Julian's company and Gregory contradicts himself when he tells us that immense pressure was put upon them to change their faith.⁽¹⁾ His alarm on behalf of his brother was probably needless,⁽²⁾ for he remained there in spite of remonstrances and remained also true to his religion, as did also Jovian, Valens, Valentinian, notable officers of the army, and many others.

In January 362 A.D., occurred at Alexandria an outrage which we cannot but feel to be shocking, in spite of all that Bishop George may have done to deserve such treatment. He was seized by the mob and cruelly done to death. Here was another Christian who had been associated with Julian, but he did not pretend to shed any tears over his fate. His letter to the ~~Antiochenes~~ ^{Alexandrians} on this occasion contained indeed a severe reprimand for such disorder, but took occasion to mention the offences which might have called it forth.⁽³⁾ "Your citizens dare to tear a human being in pieces as dogs tear a wolf, and then are not ashamed to lift up to the gods those hands still dripping with blood. But George deserved such a fate! Yea and I might say a worse and more cruel one. And for your sake, you will say. I agree, even I; but if you say at your

- (1) First Invectione 64, + 65. (2) Ep. of Gregory VII. + Oratio VII. 13.
(3) Letter 21 (Hert 10)
Gregory wrote a letter to his brother, representing his anxiety upon his behalf. Moved by it the brother went to the Emperor to declare his resolution to adhere to Christianity. Julian's comment was, "happy is the father of such unhappy children".

hands I agree no longer. For there are laws for you which ought to be, by all means, honoured and cherished by all and everyone". He pointed out how previous monarchs would have exacted the utmost penalties for this offence. He was conscious that government for the sake of its own self-respect could scarcely overlook such an ~~open disregard of law and order~~ ^{offence}, yet he forgave it with this admonition.

These were, however, incidental and personal matters, but in February 362, was published the edict proclaiming religious freedom for all and ordering the reopening of the Temples for worship, with the restoration all those which had been destroyed. (1) According to Libanius he had already given permission before the death of Constantius to the restoration of the worship of Athene in Athens, but now by general decree all faiths were made lawful, so that not only were the heathen shrines reopened, but the various afflicted sects, such as the Donatists, obtained freedom to worship and the return of such buildings as they could make a just claim to hold.

All this was part of a general policy described by Ammianus in those terms.

"After this Julian directed his whole favour and affection to people of every description about the palace; not acting in this like a philosopher anxious for the discovery of truth. For he might have been praised if he had retained a few who were moderate in their disposition, and of proved respectability and disposition",

The same writer asserts that after he had published a general proclamation for the renewal of temple-worship he called to his presence the priests of all the different Christian sects and in a constitutional spirit expressed his wish that, their

(1) Ammian. XXII. V. 2.

dissensions being appeased, each without hindrance should fearlessly follow the religion he preferred. "For" explains the historian, "he thought he should never have to fear the unanimity of the common people when liberty increased their dissension, having found by experience that no wild beasts are so hostile to men as the Christian sects. And he used often to say, 'Listen to me, the Alemanni and the Franks have listened'".

It ^{is} ~~was~~ very probable that Julian ~~should~~ thus quoted and ^{applied} ~~apply~~ to himself an expression used by the great Aurelius, but it is impossible to believe that he had so reversed the policy of his predecessors as to have formed the opinion that a contentious populace would establish his government in safety. Neither can we believe that he desired a general state of disorder in Christian circles to prevail in order that superiority might be established for the pagan cult. It has become customary to accept this explanation of Ammianus as a revelation of deep policy, whereas it ^{is}, ^{as} ~~reads~~ at first sight, ^{it appears, much more probably the} ~~much more like a characteristic~~ sneer of disappointment. If he wished contention, why should he ask the Christians in such threatening tones to listen to him. The letters, suave and friendly to Basil and Aetius, and the ^{fact} ~~statement~~ that he filled his palace with all manner of people of contrary opinions ^{are} ~~is~~ more in line with a saner policy of trying to obtain the favour ^{every} ~~of~~ type of thought and principle. Ammianus thought it unworthy of a philosopher, but it is not destitute of the character of administrative wisdom. Constantius had alienated the pagan elements of the empire and also the best Christian elements. We have shown how at the end of his reign he had left for support of his government only his own Aeacian Church. Julian may easily have recognised it as worthless in itself, and have seen the danger which

the disaffected pagans and Christians constituted. The general freedom accorded to ~~Heathen~~ and Sectaries alike was a not unnatural step towards security. He was ~~too polytheistic~~ ^{himself too pagan} in his sympathies to take the trouble to discover the rights and wrongs of the disputes within the Church, but his policy might well be that expressed by Ammianus in his first statement, namely, "to express constitutionally his wish that, their dissensions being appeased, they should without hindrance follow fearlessly the religion each preferred." If he assembled them in his palace at Constantinople for this end, it is very possible that, in seeking to dictate principles of mutual toleration, he had need to thunder like the conqueror of the Franks and Alemanni.

We might therefore suppose that the first intention of Julian towards the Christians was to leave them in such freedom as might compose their differences. It is probable that, finding them ^{at first} incapable ~~as ever~~ of being forced into agreement, ~~he~~ left them to their own devices with the sneer which Ammianus accepted as an expression of policy. Being left alone they made in point of fact considerable progress towards reconciling old grievances. Athanasius had taken advantage of the general amnesty to return to Alexandria immediately upon the death of George. A council was held there about this time, at which was adopted a wise and lenient policy towards those who had retained their offices at a sacrifice ^{of principle,} when threatened by Constantius. This council must be dated in the very early part of 362 A.D., since Athanasius only returned after the death of George and in a very short time was to be dismissed again from his city. Its tone was one of forgiveness for all past ^{defalcations} ~~disaffections~~, from strict orthodoxy, and by its equal condemnation of Sabellianism and Arianism it ^{sought to steer} ~~steered~~ a safe way

between the theological Scylla and Charybdis. In its authoritative pronouncement, the letter sent to Antioch⁽¹⁾, it introduces the term *ὁμοούσιος* and distinguishes it from *ὁμοίος* in a way ^{similar to that} ~~that came~~ ^{which was afterwards} ~~afterwards~~ to be the acknowledged correct definition. At it seem^s to have assembled all parties of former contestants, ^{it gave} an indication of how common danger but, above all the absence of external compulsion, might hasten the reconciliation of these bitter disputes. Away from the atmosphere of State-relationship this theological question assumed its proper perspective and greater unanimity prevailed than had been the case since the time of Nicaea.⁽²⁾

The policy of Julian, if we are right in judging it to have been pacific in its character, was thus justified in a general way. His strict interpretation of the legal rights of the different sections of the community caused considerable disorder, however, and gave the Christians a sense of persecution. So far as we can judge, he was at first earnest to guard all classes from any assaults upon the freedom accorded to each one to pursue his own choice in religion. He ordered, however, the restoration of all the material that had been taken from heathen temples or its equivalent. This might easily become a hardship and in many cases it offended the conscience of bishops, who had been granted by previous rulers authority to remove or to destroy portions of these buildings, and were now to be forced, as it seemed to them, to pay for the setting up of false worship. Throughout his reign there were ugly incidents connected with this law. The worst of all was the case of Marcus of Arethusa who, for principle's sake, would not give even the smallest sum towards this purpose. He was treated with savage cruelty by the mob to induce him to change his mind but remained obdurate. The savage manner of his death

(1) "Tomus ad Antiochenos." Encyclical of this Council. (Mansi III p. 345.)

(2) Rufinus. X. 30 + 32.

is said to have affected Sallust, Julian's trusted prefect, with horror⁽¹⁾, but his interventions were of no avail to save the bishop from death or torture. That officer felt this death as a stain upon his Emperor's honour, but we have no knowledge whether Julian himself dealt^{with} it by means of another letter of censure or by severer measures.

We can thus see that Julian was scarcely able to make his administration of liberty operative to all. Personally he himself was unable also to maintain it. Rufinus⁽²⁾ gives us a hint of a certain change in his attitude and dates it as commencing from the time of the imminence of the Persian war. His statement is curious however, for he says he then began an open policy against Christianity which he had previously concealed, but also states that it was a policy of rewards, honours, blandishments, and persuasions, rather than of force and torture. Even then he must have remained, therefore, true to his declared principle that he did not wish the Galileans to be slain or injured. He made it plain^{however} that preference must be shown to those of the ancient faith.⁽³⁾ In this policy were contained therefore enactments withdrawing all previous privileges which the Christian clerics had enjoyed. It was his desire to exercise strict economy in all departments.⁽⁴⁾ He had at an early opportunity taken into his sole charge the State-transport of which the ecclesiastics had ~~been~~^{made} so extravagant^{a use.} Later he decreed that municipalities need no longer provide from their taxes for the maintenance of the clergy.⁽⁵⁾ All privileges and immunities enjoyed by bishops and prebyters, were also withdrawn by decree.⁽⁶⁾ The payments given to the poor and to widows were stopped, and even it is alleged return^{was} demanded of previous receipts. The clergy were also deprived of the power to write wills, and

- (1) Sozomen V. 10. (2) X. 33. (3) letter 34. (Hort. 7)
 (4) Gregory p 45. of Instructio I. (5) Rufinus X. 33. (6) Cod. Theod. X
 Tit. I. 50.

their episcopal courts were closed.⁽¹⁾ He seems to have become convinced that the very existence of the Christians was a weakness to his rule. "They pull every rope of discord" he said, "and add fuel to the fire of disunion in every place". Athanasius who had achieved the conversion of some ladies of high rank, drew down his anger, and by letter he ordered him to exile once more.⁽²⁾ He professed that the amnesty published by no means gave him leave to resume the power of the bishopric, thus plainly showing ~~to us~~ his inability to maintain the breadth of his former principles. Perhaps such a decline was inevitable as the stories of a Licinius and even a Diocletian might witness. At all events, as his reign proceeded, his measures against the interests of Christianity increased in repressive force. There was justice in that decree whereby he ordered a certain sect of Christians who had attacked another to restore the ~~the~~ latter's churches out of their own funds. The gibe, however, that the poverty which this ruling might cause would help them to realise better the principles of their religion, reveals one too impulsive and too splenetic to keep to his own ideals of neutrality. He is said to have angrily exclaimed on the report of a certain outrage, "What matters it if one ^{Greek slay ten Galileans?} ~~Galilean is slain~~". It is believable that he so allowed his tongue ^{sometimes} to get the better of his discretion, for in cold writing he has left a taunting order to the Christians of Bostra to expel their bishop.⁽³⁾ These words were not meant seriously, but they were not the words of a wise ruler governing a people, liable to resort to mob-violence on the slightest encouragement.

One decree ⁽⁴⁾ of his which even the heathen historian Ammianus characterises as ^{cruel} ~~equal~~ reveals how incapable he was of the wide vision requisite for his difficult position. In a long

(1) Epist. of Julian. 41 (Hert. 52). (2) Letter 24 (Hert. 26)

(3) Letter 41 (Hert. 52). (4) Letter 36. (Hert. 42)

and bitter ^{statement} ~~decree~~, lacking both dignity and good sense, he forbade Christians to teach the ancient literature of Greece in the schools. His justification was that these works treated of the gods whom the Christian despised, and that therefore they could not handle such themes with fitting reverence or to the profit of their scholars. We can understand of course that a good Christian might similarly be nervous of instruction upon the Bible, given by teachers ~~sway~~ of an atheistic tendency. He might think that the influence upon the young would be very destructive of what he thought the true faith. As ^{Julian hinted} ~~he hints~~, stricter rulership ^{upon his principles} might have thought it a duty to order compulsory education of the young in the ^{ancient} ~~same~~ ^{beliefs.} ~~faith~~. He allowed liberty, however, ^{he said} to the Galileans to corrupt their own children, but not by pretence of teaching from Homer and the philosophers to corrupt the whole youth of the country. Just there, however, from the bias of his own strong religious standpoint he showed his inability to be just to this section of the community. He had known many Christian scholars of high standing. If Mardonius himself was not a Christian, Basil and Gregory were no mean rivals of his own scholarly attainments. The Christians received this forfeiture of their rights with the deepest sorrow and sense of injustice. Some of their number, notably the brothers Apollinaris, began to write the stories of the Old Testament in the Epic manner. Such narrow-minded legislation defeats itself, ^{for} ~~that~~ it is plain that, had Julian's effort been successful, his beloved literature would have perished utterly, and the world ^{would have} lost forever those master-pieces of poetic art which it was his effort to keep alive.

So fast were the old days coming back that the Christians were not unjustified in their fears that active violence might soon

follow. Some clerics already were distinguished by the hatred of the Emperor. He had ~~already~~ ordered Athanasius to retire from Alexandria ^{but that} ~~that~~ harassed bishop had found at last a favouring magistrate in Ecdicius, Prefect of Egypt, and the latter maintained an absolute silence which intensely exasperated his Emperor. (1)

It was probably in October of 362 A.D., from Antioch, whence Julian had moved towards his Persian campaign, that he wrote the ^{following} letter to the Prefect of Egypt: "As the proverb says, you told me my dream. And I fancy I am relating to you your waking visions. The Nile has risen in full flood five cubits Theophilus the military prefect informs me of this. So if you did not know it, hear it from me and let it rejoice your heart". (2)

This is equivalent to saying, "Queen Anne is dead" and then informing the Prefect on some one else's authority ^{about an event of} ~~of what it~~ ^{which it} was the Prefect's business to inform the Emperor. The reason for this sarcasm becomes evident from the subsequent letter of about the same time.

"If you do not write to me on other matters you ought at least to have written about that enemy of the gods, Athanasius, especially since for a long time past you have known my just decrees". The Emperor then swore by the god Serapis that if that bishop were not gone from Egypt before the December Kalends, he would fine the cohort of the prefect a hundred pounds of gold. The reply would seem to have been a petition ^{from the Alexandrians,} forwarded perhaps by the prefect, ~~from the Alexandrians~~ requesting that their bishop should be spared to them. Julian was shocked at such impiety in a city founded by Alexander and blessed by Serapis.

"If you choose to persist in the superstition and instruction of wicked men," he wrote, ⁽⁴⁾ at least agree among yourselves and do not crave Athanasius. I only wish that along

(1) See Lect. 45 (Hert. 50) (2) loc. cit. (3) Lect. 46 (Hert. 6)

(4) Lect. 47 (Hert. 51)

with Athanasius the wickedness of his wicked teaching were suppressed..... If you have made these requests because of the general subtlety of Athanasius, for I am informed that the man is a clever rascal - then know that on this very account he has been banished from the city. For a meddling man is unfit by nature to be a leader of the people.... wherefore as I long ago gave orders that he depart from the city I now say let him depart from the whole of Egypt".

Thus against one cleric at least were to be employed the resources of secular force. Athanasius was not disturbed. "It is a little cloud and will pass", he said, and astonished his friends by sailing, ^{whence} ~~when~~ he was, towards Alexandria and not away from it. Some forces, it is alleged, had been sent for his arrest which he passed unrecognised in his boat, and to whose enquiries, "Where is Athanasius?" he answered, "He is not far away".⁽¹⁾ It seems fairly certain at all events that he remained hidden thereafter in the very city which he had been forbidden to approach, although ^{as} we may guess from some remarks, ~~that~~ Julian suspected that he was concealed in Armenia.

Julian appears to have written thereafter a group of flattering letters to Alexandria ⁽²⁾ requesting that the obelisk might be sent to Constantinople which Constantius had designed to ^{have} raised to his honour, giving permission for a statue to be erected to his own honour in their city and patronising their local musicians. Whether this was designed to allay the anger due to their refused petition, and whether it was successful, we cannot tell.

An ecclesiastical movement developed at Antioch at this time, but as to how far the Emperor was concerned in it we have no evidence. It was certainly at his cordial invitation

(1) Rufinus X. 35. (2) Lc. Hist. 48, 49. (Hert. 58, 56)

Rufinus' love of a romantic story must be remembered in accepting this narrative.

that Aetius had gone to Constantinople. Eudoxius had been apparently slow to take any steps to secure for him there any ecclesiastical position. He was perhaps desirous of being near the Emperor's court and so induced the Bishop of Constantinople to write to Euzoius of Antioch to have him restored to the Presbyterate of that city to which he had formerly belonged. Euzoius was also slow to act but apparently eventually collected a Synod of nine bishops who reversed the ecclesiastical censure upon the Anomoean. "Euzoius contemplated sending letters to Eudoxius", says our authority ⁽¹⁾ "but it so happened that the persecution of the Christians which at that time was past all endurance, checked his attempt". ~~He must refer~~ ^{The last reference must be} to the riots which broke out at Antioch in the end of 362 or beginning of 363 over the tomb of the martyr Babylas. ⁽²⁾ Julian had ordered the removal of ~~these~~ ^{these} relics, for they lay near to the oracle of Apollo in Daphne, a suburb of Antioch, and the silence of the oracle was regarded as due to this contamination. Here was indeed a difficulty for any ruler, since heathen worship required all possible freedom from contamination of the dead, and Christian worship favoured these places where her saints were laid to rest. It was necessary for Julian in pagan interests to forbid burial by day, lest those going to worship should, by meeting funerals, be rendered ceremonially unclean. On this occasion rather ruthlessly he ordered the removal of the offending relics. The transference of the bones to another place of rest was made the occasion of an anti-pagan demonstration, the Christian crowds shouting "Confounded be all that trust in graven images". ⁽³⁾ Shortly after, the Temple of Apollo at Daphne took fire, which Christians attributed to a heathen priest's carelessness, but for which Julian blamed the Galileans. Theodore,

(1) Philostorgius. VII. 5 + 6. Antioch. See Misopogon. (2) Nine months after Julian's arrival in (3) Rufinus X. 36 cf Gregory.

a Christian youth, was tortured to extract information with regard to this disaster, and is thus put by Christian historians in the ranks of the Confessors.

With similar carelessness of Christian feelings he revived the custom in the army of ^{having} incense ~~being~~ offered to him at the payment of ^{the soldiers'} ~~their~~ donative. ⁽¹⁾ This offended the conscience of some especially when they found themselves despised as apostates by their fellow-believers for ^{following} ~~having followed~~ the old rite. A mutiny broke out, in which ^{some of} the distracted victims of the Emperor's lack of consideration ^{are said to have} rushed through the grand square crying, "We are Christians. We have been entrapped. We cast off the impiety with our blood". They then besieged the Emperor, ^{we are told,} to ask the favour of martyrdom to wipe out their disgrace and impiety. There is no doubt that ^{there may have been cases of} ~~these were~~ genuine afflictions of conscience, and although the Emperor was lenient towards the mutineers, he cannot rid himself of the accusation, not perhaps of malice, but of lack of that sympathy, which alone makes possible the wise government of people of different faiths.

Antioch was then distressed by another famine and Julian showed himself no more able to deal with it than his half-brother Gallus had been. His price-restriction created so much disorder that he placed the ^{chief citizens} ~~senators of the city~~ under arrest. The air of the city was filled with satirical lampoons and its people distinctly unfriendly when, pursuing his unpopular plan of the Persian war, he came near to leaving it upon his way farther East. He left them the bitter words of his "Misopogon", a pathetic self-defence but a proof of failure to retain the loyalty and affection of his people. Probably to his anti-Christian acts he owed also the alienation of Armenia and Edessa which hampered him

(1) Gregory I Instructio. § 83 ff.

in his movements against the Persians, and even those who admired him detected rashness in this campaign. That story is, however, out with our province. Nothing can exceed the pathos of the last scenes in Phrygia. When mortally wounded in a rear-attack he probably did not say, "Thou has conquered, Galilean," but he may have cast up his blood in devotion to the Sun-god. It is ^{also} probable ^{that,} as Ammianus records, ~~that~~ he spent his last hours discussing the immortality of the soul with his friends. When he died Jovianus was elected to the purple. The popularity which the dead emperor could win from his soldiers was evinced by that poignant ^{incident,} ~~scene,~~ when the officers issued acclaiming "Jovianus Augustus", and the troops mistook the words for an indication that Julian had, after all, recovered. They rushed forward with glad shouts and when they discovered their error turned away silenced to tears. In personal relations, in the schools of philosophers, in the field of war Julian appears to have commanded affection and loyalty, but he was apparently incapable of retaining these needed adjuncts of government as a statesman and civil ruler.

The personal character of Julian cannot but indeed arouse the greatest sympathy. His mental and moral gifts were rare ~~indeed~~ but his bookishness and moral austerity were not such as would make him personally popular in his Court, although it might have done so with the Churchmen, had he been a Christian. His martial prowess and personal favour made him a hero to his soldiers as we have said, but even ^{with them,} ~~there~~ his rigid economy was sometimes the cause of dissatisfaction. His humour was rich, but like his uncle he was "irrisor plus quam blandus", and such wit makes few friends. He had high ideals of rulership. Probably no one ever said more honestly, "I swear by the gods I have always sought to do the best

for my people", nevertheless it is certain that he inflicted injustices, which even his admirers called "cruel", and could not condone. As we read his letters the impression is borne in upon us of an intensely human personality with all the Constantian quality of extreme desire for popularity, while his "Misopogon", wrung from him by the public sneers and gibes of the people of Antioch, is evidence of how little he achieved of that aim. Far more deeply religious than his uncle or cousins^{and}, with a high sense of duty to Heaven in his government, it was his fate that the truly religious community of his empire should think him a monster of impiety. His affability, his high degree of reverence for those he thought wise or pious, his ability to be duped in this respect, his eagerness to be fair, his indiscretion, his fondness for books, his consciousness of lack of leisure to excel in literary work, all these things are to be read, as we turn over the pages of his letters. Whether they or that human, yet not unheroic, story of his campaigns and their ill-omened stages, impress us with the sense of a great man or a small, they convince us at least that we deal with one who^{was} ~~is~~ not the subtle malevolent schemer of some historians' imagination. We shall judge his acts most wisely if we understand that he sought to maintain a wise policy of retrenchment and of peace in his dominions. Gregory himself vouches for his partial success at least in this respect.⁽¹⁾ Through his strong bias for his own religion he alienated the Christians, a fatal thing to do as had long ago been discovered. That he did this completely there is no need to question, nor were their reproaches without warrant. Such intense enthusiasm ~~for~~^{for} one faith could scarcely be just to others, except in ~~a person~~^{a person} of strong self restraint, and this Julian^{was} ~~had~~ not. Having alienated that large body of his subjects, he could not long

(1) Gregory *Invective* I. 45.

have maintained a semblance of authority, and thus his early death spared him perhaps from greater humiliations than even those of Antioch.

Our understanding of his policy is therefore that his statemanship saw the need of universal toleration, ^{which was} a wise and sane diagnosis of the situation left by Constantius, but that his personal bias failed to enable him to maintain it. He showed no ~~uncompromising hostility towards other religions.~~ ^{for example, (1)} ~~desire for one faith in the Empire.~~ He wrote, a decree in favour of the Jews in which he promised to rebuild Jerusalem upon his return from the Persian war. Historians fairly unanimously say that he actually attempted to restore the Temple but was prevented by various portents. ⁽²⁾ He had thus a broader mind than his relations to Christianity would lead one to suppose. His failure in general toleration was ^{thus probably} due ~~thus~~ to the fact that in his effort, a hard and thankless effort, to breathe new life into pagan worship, he was confronted by this great organised faith which won everywhere all the honours he desired for his own cult.

The most significant part of his policy for the consideration of the relation of the State and Church is his ^{attempt} ~~effort~~ to make a pagan Church upon the Christian model. He was probably quite unconscious of imitation, but the manner in which he borrowed is evident. He was a vigorous Pontifex Maximus who viewed his duties, not in the manner of Roman Emperor, but rather of some Christian pope. "I avoid innovation in all things", he said, ⁽³⁾ "especially in relation to the gods". ~~He~~ waited on divine guidance for each detail and sought direction in prayer with the utmost faith. His Letter to a Priest (Fragmenta Epistolae) ⁽⁴⁾ and Letters 18, 19, 20 and 22 ⁽⁵⁾ show his administration of the heathen cultus. From them we can see that he raised priests to a station similar

(1) Letter 51. Hert. 25. (2) Ammian. + all Byzantine historians.

(3) Loc. Cit. 20 (Hert. 6.3) (4) Loeb Classical Edit. Vol II. 296.

(5) Hert. 62, 78, 63 + 49.

to that which Christian bishops occupied. He laid down the high moral qualities which they must possess for such an office. Wealth and luxury he saw to be ^{strong foes} ~~supreme~~ and therefore they must be the more zealous. The strictness of the Jews in moral and ceremonial worship was held up as worthy of imitation. Religion he regarded as a supreme necessity of the State. A long section of his Epistle to a Priest is taken up with teaching the ^{high importance of} ~~necessity for~~ philanthropy which must be shown to the wicked and the good, to the stranger as well as the friend. Zeus was the god of the stranger, and the god of comrades. They must help their neighbours and all mankind. He even here bade his priests note how the Christian excelled them ~~here~~ and took charge of the poor of all communities.⁽¹⁾ He advised rich dress for the Temples and simplicity for the streets, the avoidance of luxuries and worldly pleasures in a strict attention to prayer and sacrifice. He urged a benevolence which went out into the hostels and took a kindly interest in all classes of people, and ^{he} sent consignments of corn and wine to the priests for the fulfilment of this duty. Moreover by the imperial orders, Governors were not to enter Temples with a great retinue or to assume any other place in them but that of private citizens. The emperor himself indeed gave command, "When I enter the theatre unannounced, applaud me, when I enter the temple be silent, and transfer your acclamations to the gods".⁽²⁾ We cannot but wonder to see this recognition of the social value of religion in philanthropy, and this humility of State-representatives in the sphere of religion, coming from a pagan emperor. It causes one to wonder how history might have been altered had this mind, so alive to religious influence, so devoted to the government of worship and the priesthood, been that of a Christian. As it was he spent the

(1) Letter 22 (Hert. 49)

(2) Fragment 12. (Hert. letter 64)

strenuous short time of his reign in attempting the impossible. He could not make of the Roman cult the religion which he saw needful for the Empire, and everywhere the apathy of his fellow believers, and the lack of moral force in the creed of his adoption, disappointed him and probably embittered him still more against the Galileans. Julian is reported to have recorded his opinion of a writing of Basil in the pithy words, "I read, I understood, I condemned."⁽¹⁾ When we view his efforts to ~~make~~ ^{make paganism} a religion of philanthropy and ~~becoming the~~ ^{the way in which he became a} more and more incensed against the Galileans, because of his sense of failure, we can echo the words, with which Basil is said to have replied, "If you had understood, you would not have condemned".

- (1) Sozomen V. 18. They are tagged on to several forgeries to give them an appearance of authenticity, and are probably therefore in themselves dependent on a good tradition. What was their real content we cannot tell.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RESULTS OF JULIAN'S POLICY.



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Julian's reign and policy come as a convenient negative test of the conclusions which we have been forming as to the principles actuating the Church during the reigns of his predecessors. If our diagnosis of a general unanimity upon the great questions of faith hitherto agitated was correct, and we were right in believing that the State-influence, directed upon the Church from motives external to her ideals, was the cause of this general unanimity being obscured, then we should expect, in a time of isolation from imperial influence upon her internal affairs, that her clerics should advance towards a mutual understanding. This, as we have seen, was actually the case. Our records of the proceedings at Alexandria are brief but such as have come down to us reveal a sanity, a mutual sympathy, and a freedom from mere dogmatism in theological statement such as had only been realised hitherto in the quiet atmosphere of the Committee Synods. We cannot claim that the contentious spirit had entirely departed from the Church even under Julian. In some palace conference it was evidently manifested showing that even a heathen Emperor could not succeed in an attempt to enforce mutual toleration. Such a fiery bishop as Lucifer was by no means to be reconciled to any who had tampered in the late crisis with doubtful doctrine, but when we have so great an advocate of irreconcilable orthodoxy as Athanasius among the peace-makers, we recognise that a change has entered into the atmosphere of these debates. He had apparently been one of the earliest and most thoroughly convinced

believers in the idea that those, who were doctrinally in error, should be by no means admitted to the Church, or moreover allowed to carry on the functions of a Church in opposition to the Catholic body. He had used imprisonments and severities of secular punishment to enforce these principles. Now if the Encyclical Letter of the Alexandrian Council was composed under his direction he was found sitting in company with the Meletians and "Arians" advising methods of peace for all parts.⁽¹⁾ He would not have advised this method elsewhere unless he had used it and found it effective in his own diocese, and the counsel sent forth was to call together these different bodies and as fathers and brethren ^{to} deal with them for peace. To denounce the two heresies, real Arianism and Sabellianism, would, it was now perceived, effect that, and as to the ancient 'shibboleths', Socrates⁽²⁾ is wrong in saying they were to be kept in the background, but undoubtedly there was appreciation of the fact that confusion as to language did not disturb unanimity of thought. Provided that real Arianism and Saballenism were alike condemned then parties might acknowledge each other and agree informally that the Nicæan formula was "better and more accurate". This state of affairs was widespread in East and West we are told.⁽³⁾ Such agreement was the real fruit of such labours as the Macrostich, the Særmian formula of 351, and the conferences of Liberius and Basil of Ancyra. It represented the Church's undisturbed mind and thought. We cannot claim that the Arian controversy was settled never to raise its head again. National suspicion of Eastern and Western, and the hatred of Roman and invading Goth, would cause its abused terms to be again made the excuse for hatred, but in so far as it was the product of the Constantian age, it marvellously sank down to its just proportions, so soon as State-interference was absent. Thus we

⁽¹⁾ See Rufinus II. 29. Encyclical Letter. Mansi III. 347.

⁽²⁾ Socrates. III. 4. ⁽³⁾ Athanasius. Ad Rufinianum.

seem to find confirmation for the view that its bitterness was bred of certain fears arising from the State alliance. The Church was agreed completely upon the two principles, that Jesus was supreme and that correct and exact views as to divinity were of the utmost importance. Imperial authority might be suspected of tampering with the first and certainly did seek to overrule the second. When these threats ~~were~~^{were} gone, the Churchmen, hitherto separated from each other by the elements of confusion, came together. We note the reluctance of even a Eudoxius or a Euzoius to take active steps against the prevailing unanimity, and when they do so, we have reason to suspect the influence of the nearness of an Emperor, seeking the welfare of an old friend and fellow-student. All this was most natural. Faith is the Church's own province and a province of thought and prayer not of voting and legislating. If we believe that there was an agreed-on faith, we should expect it to emerge in the purely ecclesiastical atmosphere.

The reign of Julian however not only provided a negative test for the historian, but had given the Church a similar test with regard to certain views which she had been lately developing. The Sons of Constantine had increased her wealth to an enormous extent. She had seen its abuse and protested. Liberius had offered to defray Council-expenses from the Church-resources. Julian had forced the Church to do so and to be content in consequence with isolated local Councils. These had met however and with good effect.⁽¹⁾ Hilary had accused Constantius of stifling the Church's soul with gold and begged him rather to take back all his gifts. The State had taken the Church at her word, and all financial aid had been withdrawn. Such a reversal of previous policy could not fail to be a hardship, especially since it seemed to be accompanied with a demand for restoration of some past

payments. It is however the ~~unwilling~~ testimony of Julian himself⁽¹⁾ that the Church was still able to provide for the poor of the heathen as well as for her own. She was not crippled or hampered to any irremediable extent. The feeling might consequently have been one of relief, and the idea ^{might have been} established that as excessive wealth had done harm in the past and the lack of it was not a hindrance now, the Church should renounce all such gifts in the future. We find on the contrary, however, that the refusal to offer gifts to the cause of Christianity was regarded as a grave impiety on the part of Julian, in which he was compared unfavourably with even so notoriously bad a ruler as Gallus, his half-brother. Even although the greater part of the deprivations of privileges which the Christians suffered was part of a general and much needed regime of economy, we find no appreciation of this on their part, ~~of Christians~~, but rather these aims were belittled in contrast to the mischief ~~was~~ wrought to the happiness of the Christian community.⁽²⁾ There was further no protest against the restoration of these financial resources in the subsequent period. The mind of the Constantian Church was thus set not against the principle of using material aid of this sort but against excess or abuse. The outbursts of Hilary and the renunciation of the monks and sectaries might be taken as that type of reaction which goes to an extreme so far as the general opinion is concerned. For the great majority, we may take it, wealth was recognised as a danger against which safeguards must be taken, but it was by no means their present temper to declare State-help illegitimate or poverty a blessing.

Again she protested and much more keenly against the loss of honourable recognition. Converts for fashions sake we may well believe now turned their allegiance in other directions.

⁽¹⁾ *Eccl. Hist.* 22. (H. *eccl.* 49) of *Maropogon*. p. 363 A.B. ⁽²⁾ *Gregory Inverdict* I. 25.

Christians indeed believed that under Julian a system of wholesale bribery and favouritism prevailed at Court which turned many away from her towards the Imperial cult. This was probably much exaggerated. Men of character as we have noted did not appear to labour under any great disadvantage in high circles, but we can be certain that a great mass of sycophants would be ready to act as turncoats. Their numbers would give rise to the rumours of Julian's great proselytising energy, ~~which Gibbon has surprisingly accepted~~. This type of convert had caused the utmost trouble to the Church, but she was now grieved at their loss. Moreover she regarded as grossly unfair the contemptuous names which the Emperor used for his Christian subjects. The constant association of the imperial name with emblems of the heathen faith was censured. "He mixes his impiety" says Gregory⁽¹⁾, "with the customary honours of the sovereign, ~~and~~ thus bringing into one the Roman laws and the worship of idols. He exposes these (associated representations of himself and idols) to peoples and to cities and above all to those in government of nations, so that he could not miss being in one way or another mischievous; for either, by honour paid to the sovereign, that to idols was insinuated, or else, by the shunning of the latter, the sovereign himself was insulted". The necessity for a divorce between religion and the State was not however the conclusion drawn from the evil of this practice, for the abandonment of the Christian emblem of the army, the Labarum, was regarded as a fatal impiety.⁽²⁾ That there was a due of honour which might be paid to religion was thus the conviction of the Church, and one looks, in vain, ⁱⁿ ~~to~~ her consciousness for a limitation in respect of paying it to her faith.

Similarly with regard to the use of civil force to execute the decrees of the Church, despite the evil experience of

(1) Gregory Invectione. I. 81.

(2) loc. cit. I. 66

the reign of Constantius, the Church was not convinced of its illegitimacy. There was no complaint indeed in Julian's reign of the lack of power to suppress sectaries, but we note that even the Donatists, above all ^{people,} came forward to receive, from the hands of Julian, their Churches and other buildings. The Church still believed the State's support for her creed of value. On the death of Julian, Athanasius and the Acacians wrote to express to Jovian the happy results of new found harmony upon the Nicene formula.⁽¹⁷⁾ Some of those deprived by the Anomoeans of their Churches applied to him also to drive these clerics forth as being unjustly in possession, in view of their variations in doctrine from the rest of Catholic Christianity. The lessons of the evil of persecuting zeal had no doubt been learned by many, although we cannot say that they had made a deep impression, but most plainly even ^{according to} ~~in~~ the mind of the world-shunning Donatist, there was a service which the State might be asked to pay as part of its general administration to the Church, namely that of seeing that buildings and offices were occupied by those who legitimately might claim them.

We might expect to find in the Constantian Church the most vigorous expression of the principles of spiritual independence, ^{She had passed from a} for ~~it came out of the~~ time of undisputed ecclesiastical authority, ^{and even} from the freedom of outlawry into ^{alliance} with the State. ^{She} ~~It~~ had an intense tradition of other-worldliness in ^{her} ~~its~~ consciousness, and was in the direct line of advance to the great statement of ^{her} ~~its~~ Theocratic rights in the De Civitate Dei of St. Augustine. If that can be taken as proof of ^{her} ~~its~~ purity of tradition in this respect, we would find reason to assert that these principles do not exclude the use of these various means of ~~State~~ financial resource, honourable recognition, and secular force to execute her decrees, which the State may put at the disposal of the Church from time to

(17) Athanasius Ad Jovianum. Theodoret IV. 3, Acacian letter in Socrat. III. 25.

time. The Church of this period used them wherever available, and only protested when the weapons which she had taken up developed a degree of independence, and sought to exert themselves for other aims than those which were in her desires. She had learned lessons, or at least ^{had} had experiences which might ^{have proved} be educative, as to the danger of their abuse, but there was apparently nothing in principle which made them seem to her illegitimate in themselves. As in all other things she might detect lying in them the danger of a sinful excess which defeated its own object. As means however to her end, they seemed to her to come within her sovereignty. The State did what was right in her eyes when it placed itself at her service for certain purposes. What she utterly protested against was the attempt of the State to use her for its own.

Gregory in his sermons upon the death of Julian gives Constantius the credit of a deeper insight than that ruler, in that he conceived of the Church and the Empire as a pair rising together with inter-connected destiny. There ^{had been, as we saw,} ~~are other~~ suggestions in ^{Lactantius} ~~etc.~~ ^{Buschius} Hosius, ~~and~~ Hilary, ^{etc.} that the sovereignty of the Empire was recognised as a correlated power with the Church. She had no need to emphasise its independence and supremacy in its own sphere. One could not therefore argue that she subordinated the State to the Church and gave it no other function than that of a servant. Such doctrine might be to follow, but her silence as to the State's sovereignty is rather explicable from the reason that she had no need to declare what was obvious. We have noted the general obedience and subservience of the Churchmen of this age, even of so powerful a bishop as Athanasius, to State authority. Pope Gelasius ^{at a later date} ~~argued~~ ^{would assert} the greater importance of ecclesiastic ^{al} authority in that priests must give ^{an} account to God of the emperors themselves. The Churchmen of this age made it abundantly clear to Constantius,

however, that he must himself give an account to God of his manner of dealing with all his subjects, bishops and laymen. The Roman Empire was not yet so near to its decline that the Church might take to itself all its ^{old} sovereign rights. The wandering races were still kept at bay by its armies, and with the clerics as with all others the idea of Lactantius might prevail that when the head of the Roman world should fall, the end of humanity and of the world should have begun at last.⁽¹⁾ We find at least no evidence to support the idea of any change from this thought regarding the Empire, which had become indeed traditional. When Christians recognised the Empire at all as in the scheme of legitimate things, then no less a function was accorded than this of being the last and ultimate ^{under ordinary earthly conditions,} guarantee of civilisation and indeed of human ^{social life.} ~~existence~~. The dispute with the Empire's sovereign rights must be all understood as governed by this idea. There were limits to that authority, but the idea that the Church could in all matters determine ~~the~~ ^{the State's} authority, or make it a mere servant of her will never occurred to her. "It is not permitted unto us to exercise earthly rule," said Hosius to Constantius, "nor are you, sire, permitted to burn incense". She had emphasised her own sovereignty in opposition to the attempt to quash it, and had indicated wherein she detected ^{the authority of her} ~~that~~ sovereignty to lie, namely in the divinity of Jesus. ^{Thus she} ~~and so~~ ^{had} established that in any crisis she must obey God rather than man. She had shown what she conceived the rule of Jesus to mean, namely the search for a great End or Ideal, for God; and that her wish for State-help in any direction was in prosecution of that End. She had recognised that the End had included within it a social order, purged of all stumbling-blocks such as might make impossible for any the approach to God. Working out that idea might reveal to her the error of some of the State-means she had chosen, but

(1) Lactant. Institutes vi. 25.

with the social order as such she showed no inclination to tamper. Her influence upon the legislation of Constantine, as we saw, was chiefly towards the removal of things hampering to the pursuit of the religious ideal. This might suggest further humanitarian proposals in the future, but it was not purely humanitarian ideas which dictated her policy. She worked, as we have said, with no ready-made principle but only by the experimental method suggested by her final aim. ^{In} her conceptions, therefore, she might use any weapon, which the State put within her power and which seemed for her purpose convenient. It would be fair comment to say that, absorbed in her aim and zealous for it, she was not actually conscious of what might be due in common justice to those indifferent to her ideals, or desirous of reaching them by other methods; and that, considering her praiseworthy eagerness, it was rather the blame of the State than ~~of~~ hers, if she was allowed to trespass beyond what was just. She never displayed the temper which would justify ~~us~~ in saying that she would not have bowed down, without resentment, to the State's self-restriction in giving her its help. She was blameworthy in adopting means that must obviously defeat her end, but while it was her business to know what was useful, it was the States ^{function} to know what was right and just. The fact to be read indeed from that consistent inconsistency, which adopted wealth, prestige, ^{and} civil force, whenever it could, and protested, whenever it was used against it, is that, in the mind of Constantian Christianity, the legitimacy of those weapons was not ^{so much} a question of spiritual autonomy ^{as} of civil justice. As Churchmen they used them, as civilians they raised their protest. In Hilary's address to Constantius we can see the two elements at war in one man, the cleric to whom heretics are impious obstacles on the way to God, the civilian resentful at the punishment meted out by the

~~The forged letter of Constantine showed a mind which would have thought it right of him to refuse to meddle with the ecclesiastical judgment upon the Donatist question. He would have of course how far a consistent attitude of this sort would have pleased the Church, but there are indications that it would have been expected.~~

state to those whose views it ^{was} ~~in~~ not pleased to pronounce correct. His praise of Constantine in contrast with his sons showed that the Church mind, although it did not preach to monarchs the duty of restraint in Church-support, could recognise its value. It was found that a ruler, true to the sovereignties of his own principles of administration, gained greater honour from the Church at large, than one over generous in favours.

Julian's reign indeed was in itself an object lesson on the evil of a priest-governed State. His absorbing interest in religion made his government, so successful in much else, entirely unjust to the Christians. He afforded them too little protection from attack. He deprived them of elementary rights. Can it be regarded as a proper discharge of the State's duty to turbulent and murderous mobs, to point out that they separate themselves by such conduct from the heroic Alexander and the divine Serapis? (1) In that particular, he dealt with a case for administrative firmness by the method of priestly exhortation. Again, fearing impiety, he forbade certain people to teach certain writings, and hinted that he ought to enact decrees for compulsory education of a certain religious description for all children, in order to protect them from demoralisation during their years of defencelessness. This was a type of legislation entirely dominated by religious concerns of which the Church ^{have taken} might note to her own profit. Apart altogether from the fact that paganism was the religion controlling his actions, his injustice and his failure to be true to his own principles of toleration were manifest. The reason was, that as a Statesman he said, "Let all faiths be free", and as a Priest, he was eager to propagate one manner of establishing contact with the divine.

His immediate successors had learned something from those

events. The ruination of the Church by the excessive favours of Constantius and the injustice of Julian's government were plain to heathen and Christians alike, and we are not therefore surprised at the greater diffidence with which Jovian, for example, declared for a religious policy. He might see that elementary justice came from the State's point of view first in all matters. Administration had to use universal principles capable of being made binding on all. The Church might have a touchstone of verity but the State had none, and so had to be governed by a survey of men's opinions. The Church could judge what was useful to her end, but the State had to take into account its duty of providing all men with liberty to pursue their ends, even although some of these were not the best. It must keep such order, as prevented the interference of any ^{section} with others, in pursuing what they thought the ideal of life. Its principle of limitation had to be in fact that of encroachment upon such freedom. It had not merely a negative function of course, and legitimately could farther and aid the pursuit of the highest and best aims of life, but it could not do this ^{if such action} ~~if it~~ necessitated interference with the attainment of ideals which might be less noble, but which appealed to some considerable section of the people, and ~~which~~ in themselves, hindered no other section in the pursuit of their choice. Fidelity to her sovereign principles of order and general liberty might therefore cause her to restrain her hand even from the best of works. The State's practice and experience, and its greater ability to judge in its own province, together with the Church's real ignorance upon the subject, made it incumbent upon it not to be rashly led into errors similar to those of Julian in another direction. On some such principles, conscious or unconscious, Jovian must have acted.⁽¹⁾ As a result he earned at his death the praise of the heathen Themistius for allowing all to

(1) He appears to have refused to interfere on behalf of those who protested at the Anomoean possession of their churches. He was not personally a strong ruler, but therefore the more likely to be led by opinions which swayed the public mind as a result of past errors.

worship according to conscience, and the affectionate tears of the Christian bishop, Theodoret, for restoring the Church's revenues.⁽¹⁾ Such restraint and prudence in supporting the cause of religion were abundantly suggested as the attributes of wise statesmanship in view of the errors of previous rulers.

Nevertheless Julian had revealed a clear insight with regard to the State's vital need of the Church. A ruler and a priest in one, he more than any other saw wherein they came together. His vehement appeals for philanthropy show not only the religionist's appreciation of the greatest way to divine communion,⁽²⁾ but the Statesman's consciousness that the inequalities of social life require, as balm and ameliorative, something legislation can never wholly supply. The Church, for all her other-worldliness, had also perceptions awake ^{to find} ~~for~~ God, immanent in ^a ~~the~~ needy brother, helped and comforted. Athanasius in a certain passage shows us the combination of ideas in her mind. Describing the happy results of his return to Alexandria, he says "How many unmarried women, who were before ready to enter upon marriage, remained virgins to Christ How many widows and how many orphans who were before hungry and naked, now through the great zeal of the people, were no longer hungry and went for the clothed". She could find God both in world-shunning and in service within ^{the world.} ~~the~~ For this efficient power in her, the Constantians had looked favourably upon her, and now her right to an independent existence had been secured. Hand in hand, therefore, Church and State might move forward to their future tasks. If they could be true each to its own sovereign principles, not losing the Divine End in the Universal systematisation dear to administration, or the ~~universality~~ ^{the} of outlook necessary for justice in any particular means of achieving ^{the} religious end, they could work together a great work, ~~so~~ they might establish the peace

(1) *Socrat. III. 25. Theodoret. IV. 4 & 5.*
(2) *Letter 22 (Hort) & Fragment "A Priest" (Loeb Classical. II. p. 297)*

and order wherein man might pursue their aims ^{work for} and ^{the} advancement and encouragement of men in the highest aims of all human seeking, namely, ~~Communion~~ and union with God. Whatever they have accomplished in this direction together is owing in no small measure to the Constantians who, first among statesmen, sought the Church's alliance, and to the Church of the Constantians who kept their society from being merged entirely in the State. Thus, despite many errors, they created together the alliance and mutual understanding of each others rights ⁱⁿ ~~on~~ ^{Church and State} which ~~they~~ now live, and can therefore claim their share of honour for all that ^{may thereby have been} ~~which may have~~ accomplished for human welfare and to the glory of God.

The Constantian ^{period} ~~period~~ had brought Church and Empire together and ~~had~~ modified the conceptions of both. The ~~fundamental~~ dangers lying ^{under} ~~in~~ the alliance had been successfully met, and the principal advantages, which it offered, had to some extent been utilised. In a final summary of the results we may ask first what changes had been made in the Church. She had emerged from a state of outlawry or mere toleration to honourable recognition and State support. This had however threatened her former liberties and even her identity as a separate foundation. She had as against any threat of domination by external authority emphasised, beyond all possibility of its being ignored, her divine right to offer allegiance to her own corporation. She had shown herself unshakeable in the conviction that her Founder was ^{thrown} ~~placed~~ above all possible divine sanctions, such as might belong to other institutions. She had also established the means whereby her authoritative voice might speak. The pope-dom was only in process of development, but the Synod had been declared to ^{be} ~~an~~ an all-decisive organ of self-government. We cannot say that she had come to a conclusion upon the question as to what constituted a true and valid Synod. The priority of faith or of morals had been debated at different assemblies, but she had the faith that a proper Synod ^{spoke} ~~speak~~ the authoritative decisions of the Church, and she was not afraid to oppose their findings to the highest representatives

of earthly government. Neither of these principles were new but they ^{had received} ~~received~~ new emphasis in conflict with the State and ^{had} became established as those upon which she would found her autonomy in all future relations with it.

The Church had also moved away from the isolation of earlier days to view the world itself as in some degree a part of her aim. The Milleniarist teaching of former times had become less prominent and the outlook it brought with it was modified. She had learned to legislate for a better social order. Some of this work she sought to do alone. She had evolved a penitential system, for example, and had also pronounced upon the question of lawful callings for Christians. Other elements in it she attempted to accomplish through the State. Among these must be classed her efforts to improve the tone of legislation and her use of civil force to restrain heathen practices and heretical teaching. These were notable changes in her attitude to the world. It is possible of course to exaggerate her previous sense of isolation and her indifference to worldly things, but the phenomenon of the period is the development the movement called Catholicism, in so far as that is an effort to make the Church a kind of State in itself,, legislating on behalf of the general welfare of humanity. The realisation of a world-wide social duty with the double method of fulfilling it by internal regulation and ^{by} influence upon the secular administration ^{is} ~~is~~ the feature of the Constantian Church. We have remarked that her work here was experimental. She had not ~~the~~ assurance regarding it which she had upon other topics, and so wavered in her opinion of different methods chosen. The idea ~~of~~ ^{of} a general duty of this sort may be affirmed as recognised by the great majority. A party would have carried it to excess to the subordination of other matters. A considerable body fled from it entirely. The mind of the Church as a whole lay however between these two extremes.

What changes had been effected in the State? It had come to the alliance as a heathen power, resting its authority

upon ideas of its own divine nature. It had sought to dominate Christianity and indeed to absorb the Church. It had ^{however,} not only learned of the equal sovereignty of that institution, but had been enlightened as to its own sanctions for its authority. Its divine right had not been questioned but had been exhibited as resting upon a stewardship of a trust received from God. This as we saw was the form in which the clerics put their appeal to Constantius- a natural one to Christian thinkers, but a pregnant one, of which the implications have been by no means yet exhausted. The Constantian Churchmen showed that they believed that the Emperor received his power from God and could not keep it except with the help of God. Ultimately he must give an account to God for it. From this idea could be worked out the various duties which they thought to ^{be} his, in furthering the cause of religion, in respecting its freedom etc. In consistency however they must have admitted that, as his was the stewardship, so his free conscience must determine his course of action. It was the Church's duty to keep governors religious but not to govern. We have noted indeed as a characteristic of the Constantian Church's mind, ^{as exhibited even by} ~~even in~~ the great protagonists of freedom, a ~~fully~~ submissive attitude to the State's authority in its own sphere and even out of its sphere. Christianity ^{in point of fact} gave ~~indeed~~ a stronger authoritative right to the State than the Caesar-godhead sanction had afforded, because its conception of stewardship was one of sincere belief. What a buttress it might supply even to decadent institutions, history was to prove.

The State also received a new impulse from its new sanction. The Christian influence flowing into its veins gave it a new vitality. The most potent influence upon Roman legislation hitherto was probably the Stoic Ethic. Professor Edward Caird ⁽¹⁾ has said upon this subject:- "Everyone from the highest to the lowest was taught by them (the Stoics) to regard himself as a law and an end to himself, and to recognise the same universal duty as belonging to all men in virtue of their common humanity.

~~It was this idea under the~~

(1) *Evolution of Theology in the Greek Thinkers* II. 163.

It was this idea under the name of the law of nature which inspired and guided generations of Roman lawyers and which gradually transformed the narrow legal system of a Latin town into the great code of Justinian, that body of legislation upon which the jurisprudence of all civilised people is based. With the universal law of the Stoic mingled ^{we may add} however, from the time of Constantine, the divine ideal of the Christian. The Codex Theodosius containing the laws of this period went also to the making of the Justinian code. "In it," says Schaff "we have evidence that the warm heart of the Christian beats beneath the toga of the Roman lawmaker." Roman administration had henceforth not merely a code of universal law behind it, but the conception of a perfect state of things before it, towards which it might seek to make humanity advance. What idealism mingles with the individualism of the final system of Roman jurisprudence can be claimed as to some extent the influence of Christianity alone. Thus from the Constantian period emerged a new State with a stronger and holier sanction and ^{with} a new energy derived from a new vision of its duties. If the Church had discovered a new earthly ~~task~~ ^{task} the State had learned something of the divine elements which were involved in its secular duties.

Our third question must be what was the relation of this new Church and new State to each other. It had at least emerged that neither was a function of the other. Experiments in this direction had proved a failure. The Church had also declared her principle of freedom. It had been asked by the mouth of an Athanasius, if the State were to take all functions to itself, what need there was of men called bishops. It had been declared by that of ^a Hosius, that it was the highest impiety for a secular ruler to take to himself authority in this sphere. The Church's mind was, that as clerics had no right to rule, so Emperors could not define faith and piety. Nevertheless the Church had no desire to live in outlawry. She recognised even in the heat of conflict some right of the civil authority to see that she maintained the principles of justice, of constitutional pro-

cedure at Synods etc. In some things she claimed absolute freedom, in others ~~she~~ recognised the authority of the State. With fair consistency she kept creed among the former class ^{some clerics} although ~~she~~ ^{which} thought it the civil magistrate's duty to see that the creed ^{tolerated.} ~~she~~ pronounced correct, was preached and no other. In the latter class she put, in addition to the orderly procedure mentioned above, all cases of clerics behaving with illegal violence or guilty of any ~~civil~~ offence, although the trial of bishops by bishops was granted to her within this period. The State on the other hand recognised ~~the~~ clerics as magistrates. They had apparently even at their disposal ~~and~~ force ^{which} ~~as~~ could carry out sentences of minor punishments such as scourging and imprisonment.. The Synods had also the authority of Courts of the realm, and their depositions were followed by sentences of exile from the civil power. The highest executive officer of the State ^{however, namely,} ~~the~~ Emperor, claimed exemption from all necessity of carrying out their decisions in every case. Nor could we say that, even in respect of ^{the} Churches ~~and~~ ^a principle had been established which could interfere with his universal administrative discretion, except that it ^{had been} ~~was~~ wrested even from Constantius that he could not, for himself without Churchmen's aid, determine the creed. The State also therefore in some things retained freedom, in others gave authority to the Church. As we might expect, the mind of both Church and State was in considerable confusion as to the question of the frontiers of the two sovereign powers. Indeed we see the various problems emerging which have caused a long discussion in the history of the Church, and conflicting pronouncements made upon them. What did emerge of a definite sort was, however, that degree of coordinate jurisdiction, ~~mutually~~ accorded, in which a working partnership might be set up. It was established that the State should not out-law the ^{Church} ~~Church~~ ^{seek to} ~~or~~ absorb it. The Church ^{also} ~~found~~ a middle way between a Eusebian and a monastic policy. She strengthened her firm

hold upon her first principles. She expected less that the ~~king~~
Kingdom of her ~~hopes~~ would come as a sudden gift from Heaven.
She pondered deeply her divine origin and confirmed her ~~faith~~^{faith}
in her continual heavenly guidance, and girded herself to build
the kingdom upon earth. Her two resources would be valued in
different degrees ^{at} and different times and in different quarters.
~~but~~ They were ^{however to be henceforth} a State-system, impregnated with the suggestions
of a Heavenly ideal, and a Church, organising itself to shepherd
the whole flock of humanity along the Way to God.